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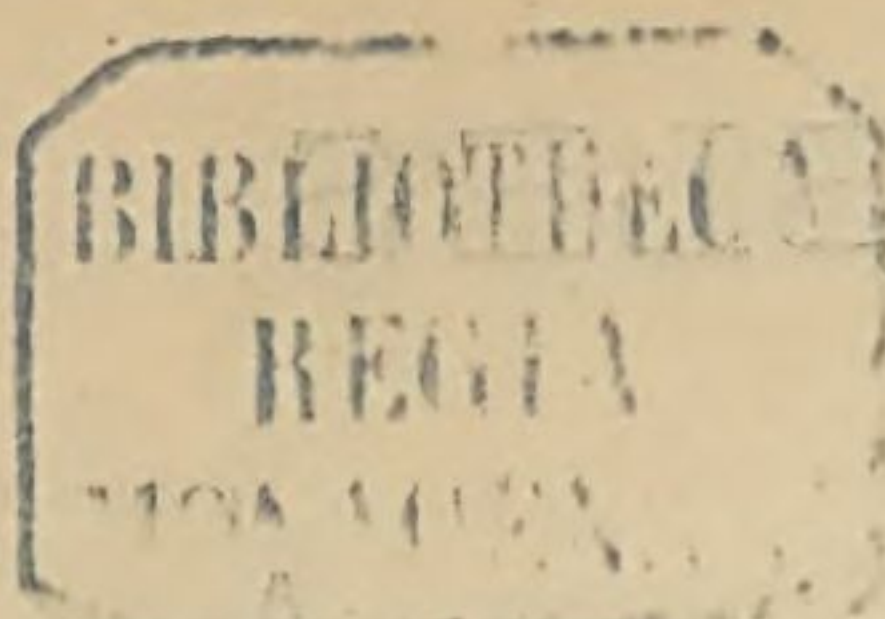
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THE FABLES OF AESOP





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The Fables of Aesop.

II.

Ballantyne Press
BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.
EDINBURGH AND LONDON



The Fables of Æsop

as first printed by WILLIAM CAXTON in 1484

with those of Avian, Alfonso and Poggio,

now again edited and induced

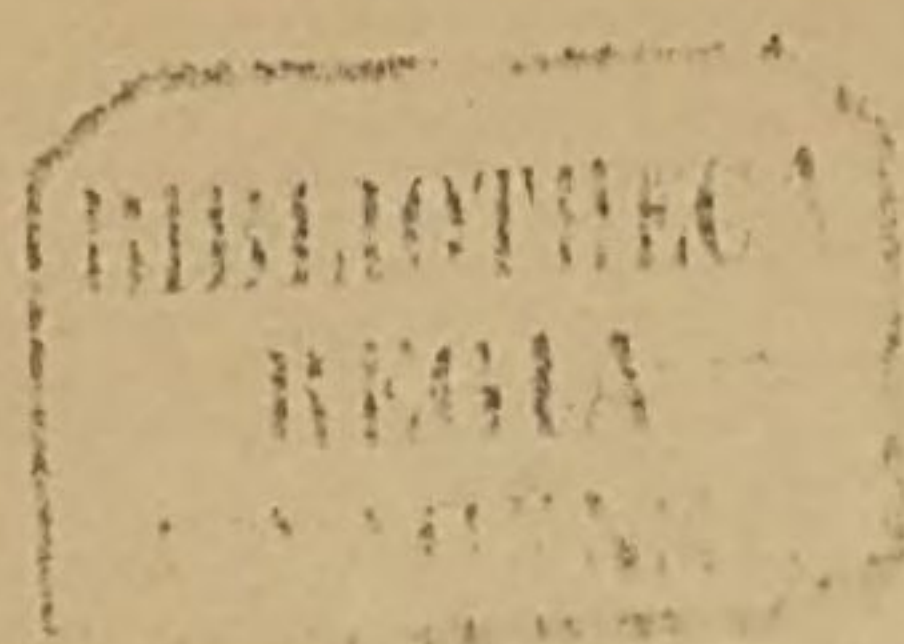
by Joseph Jacobs.

II.

TEXT AND GLOSSARY.



LONDON. PUBLISHED BY DAVID NUTT IN
THE STRAND. M.D.CCCLXXXIX.



¶ Here begynneth the book
of the subtyl historyes and Fables
of Esope whiche were translated
out of Frensshe in to Englysshe
by william Caxton



At Westmynstre In the yere of oure Lorde
.m. cccc.lxxxiiij

Here begynneth the preface or prologue of
the fyrste booke of Esope



Romulus son of thybere of the
Cyte of Atyque / gretynge / Esope
man of grece / subtyll and In-
genyous / techeth in his fables
how men ought to kepe and
rewle them well / And to thende that he
shold shewe the lyf and customes of al maner
of men / he induceth the byrdes / the trees and
the beestes spekyng to thende that the men
may knowe wherfore the fables were found /
In the whiche he hath wretton the malyce of
the euylle people and the argument of the
Improbables / He techeth also to be humble and
for to vse wordes / And many other fayr En-
samples reherced and declared here after / the
whiche I Romulus have translated oute of grekes
tongue in to latyn tongue / the whiche yf thou
rede them / they shalle aguyse and sharpe thy
wytt and shal gyue to the cause of Joye /

C The first fable is of the cock and of the
precious stone /



s a Cok ones sought his pasture in
the donghülle / he fond a precious
stone / to whome the Cok sayd /
Ha a fayre stone and precious
thow arte here in the fylth And
yf he that desyreth the had found the / as I
haue he wold haue take the vp / and sette the
ageyne in thy fyrst estate / but in vayne I haue
found the / For no thyng I haue to do with
the / ne no good I may doo to the ne thou
to me / And thys fable sayde Esope to them
that rede this book / For by the cok is to
vnderstond the fool which retcheth not of
sapyence ne of wysedome / as the cok retcheth
and setteth not by the precious stone / And by
the stone is to vnderstond this fayre and play-
faunt book

¶ This second fable is of the wulf and the
lambe /



f the Innocent and of the shrewe
Esop reherceth to vs suche a
fable / howe it was so / that the
lambe and the wulf had bothe
thurst / and went both to a Ryuer
for to drynke / ¶ It happed that the wulf dranke
aboue & the lambe dranke bynethe / And as the
wulf sawe & percyued the lambe / he sayd with
a hyghe voys / Ha knaue why hast thou troubled
and

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and fowled my water/ whiche I hold now drynke /
Allas my lord fauf your grece / For the water
cometh fro yow toward me / Thenne sayd the
wulf to the lambe / Haft thou no shame ne drede
to curſe me / And the lambe ſayd My lord with
your leue / And the wulf ſayd ageyne / Hit is
not fyxe monethes paſſyd that thy fader dyd to
me as moche / And the lambe anſuerd yet was
I not at that tyme born / And the wulf ſaid
ageyne to hym / Thou haſt ete my fader / And
the lambe anſuerd / I have no teeeth / Thenne
ſaid the wulf / thou arte wel lyke thy fader /
and for his fyne and myſdede thou ſhalt deye /
The wulf thenne toke the lambe and ete hym /
This fable ſheweth that the euylle man retcheth
not by what maner he may robbe and deſtroye
the good and Innocēt man.

¶ The thyrd fable is of the rat / and of the
frogge /



ow it be so / that as the rat went in
pylgremage / he came by a Ryuer /
and demaunded helpe of a frogge
for to passe / and go over the
water / And thenne the frogge
bound the rats foote to her foote / and thus
fwymed vnto the myddes ouer the Ryuer / And
as they were there the frogge stood styll / to
thende that the rat shold be drowned / And in
the meane whyle came a kyte vpon them / and
bothe bare them with hym / This fable made
Esop for a symylytude whiche is prouffitable to
many folkes / For he that thynketh evylle ageynst
good / the evil whiche he thynketh shall ones
falle upon hym self.

¶ The fourth fable is of the dogge and the
sheep



5
10
15
20
 f the men chalengynge / whiche ever
 be sekynge occasion to doo some
 harme and dommage to the good /
 faith Esope suche a fable / Som-
 tyme was a dogge / whiche de-
 maunded of a sheep a loof of brede that she had
 borrowed of hym / And the sheep ansuerd that
 neuer she had none of hym / The dogge made
 her to come before the Juge / And by cause the
 sheep denyed the dette / the dogge provysed and
 broughte with hym fals wytnes / that is to wete
 the wulf / the mylan & the spaehawk / And
 whanne these wytnes shold be examyned and
 herd / the wulf sayd to the Juge / I am certayne
 & me remembreth wel / that the dogge lend to
 her a loof of brede / And the myllan went and
 sayd / she receyued hit presente my persone /
 And the sperowhawk said to the sheep / come
 hyder why denyest thou that whiche thou hast
 take and recyued / And thus was the poure sheep
 vaynquysshed ¶ And thenne the Juge com-
 maunded to her that she shold paye the dogge /
 wherefore

wherfore she fold away before the wynter her
flees and wulle for to paye that / that she neuer
had / and thus was the poure sheep despoyled /
In fuche maner done the euylle hongry peple
which by theyr grete vntrouthe and malyce
robben and despoillen the poure folke

¶ The fyfthe fable is of the dogge and of the
pyece of flesshe



He that desyreth to haue other mens
goodes oft he loseth his owne
good / whereof Esope reherceth to
vs suche a fable / In tyme passed
was a dogge that wente ouer a
brydge / and held in his mouthe a pyece of
flesshe / and as he passed ouer a brydge / he
perceywed and sawe the shadowe of hym /
and of his pyece of flesshe within the water /
And he wenyng that it had be another pyece
of flesshe / forthwith he thought to haue take
it / And as he opened his mouthe / the pyece
of flesshe fylle in to the water / and thus he lost
it / Ryghte soo is of many / for whanne they
thynke to robbe other / they lese theyr owne
and propre good / wherfor for the loue of a vayn
thyng men ought not to leue that whiche is
certeyn.

C The by fable is of the lyon and of the cowe /
of the goote and of the sheep



Men sayen that it is not good to ete
plommes with his lord / ne to the
poure it is not good to have par-
tage and dyuyfyon with hym which
is ryche & myghty / wherof Esope
reherceth fuche a fable / The cowe / the gote &
the sheep went ones a hūtyng & chafe / with the
lyon and toke a herte / And whanne they cake /
[came] to haue theyr parte / the lyon sayd to
them / My lordes I late you wete / that the fyrst
part is myn by cause I am your lord / the second
by cause / I am stronger than ye be / the thyrd /
by cause I ranne more swifter than ye dyd / and
who so ever toucheth the fourthe parte / he shall
be myn mortal enemy / And thus he took for
hym selfe alone the herte / And therfore this
fable techeth to al folk / that the poure ought
not to hold felauship with the myghty / For
the myghty man is neuer feythfull to the poure

¶ The seventh fable is of the thief and of
the sonne.



O man is chaunged by nature but
of an euyl man maye wel yssue
and come a wers than hymself /
wherof Esope telleth suche a
fable / A thief held the feest of
his weddyng / And his neyghbours came there
as the fest was holden and worshipped / and bare
honour to the thief / And as a wyse man sawe
that the neyghbours of this thief were ioyeful
and glad / he sayd to them / Ye make joye &
gladnes of that / wherof ye sholde wepe / take
hede thenne to my wordes and vnderstond your
ioye / ¶ The sonne wolde ones be maryed / But
alle the Nacions of the world were ageynst hym /
& prayd Iupiter that he shold kepe the sonne
fro weddyng / & Jupiter demaūded of them
the cause why they wolde not haue hym to be
wedded / the one of them said / Iupiter thou
knowest wel / how ther is but one sonne & yet
he brenneth vs al / & yf he be maryed & haue
ony children / they shal destroye al kynde / And
this fable techeth vs that we ought not to be
reioysshed of euyl felowship /

¶ The viij fable is of the wulf and of the crane



Ho so euer doth ony good to the
euyll man he synneth as Esope
saith / for of ony good which is
don to the euils cometh no prou-
ffit / wherof Esope reherceth to
vs fuche a fable / A wulf ete & deuoured a sheep
of whos bones he had one in his throte which he
coule not haue out & sore it greued hym / thenne
went the wulf & praid the crane that she wold
draw oute of his throte the bone / & the crane
put her nek in to his throte & drewe out the bone
wherby the wulf was hole / ¶ And the crane de-
maunded of hym to be payd of her salary ¶ And
the wulf answerd to her / Thou arte well vn-
cōnyng & no good connyng / remembryng the
good that I haue done to the / for whan thou
haddest thy neck within my throte / yf I had
wold / I might haue ete the / and thus it ap-
piereth by the fable how no proufite cometh of
ony good whiche is done to the euyle

¶ The ix fable is of the two bytches



It is not good to byleue what flaterers
 and euyll men faye / for by theyr
 fwete wordes / they deceyue the
 good folke / whereof Esope re-
 herceth such a fable / This was a
 bytche which wold lyttre and be delyuerd of her
 lytyl dogges / and came to the hows of another
 bytche / & prayd her by fwete and fayre wordes
 that she would lene to her a place for to lyttre
 her lytyll dogges / And this other lend to her /
 her bed and her hows wenyng to doo wel /
 And whan the bytche had lyttred her lytyl
 dogges / the good bytche sayd to the other / that
 it was tyme that she shold goo and departe oute
 of her hows And then the bytche and her young
 dogges ranne vpon the other / and boot and
 casted her oute of her owne hows / and thus for
 to have doo well / grete dommage cometh ofte
 therfore And ofte the good men lese theyr goodes
 by the decepcion and flaterye of the peruers and
 evylle folke /

¶ The tenth fable is of the man and of the
serpent



He that leneth and helpeth the euylle
men / synneth / for after that men
have doo to them some good /
they hurte them afterward / For
as men sayen comynly / yf ye
kepe a man fro the galhows / he shalle neuer
loue yow after / wherof Esope reherceth fuche
a fable / ¶ A man was som tyme whiche fond a
serpent within a Vyne / and for the grete wynter
and frost the serpent was hard / and almost dede
for cold wherof the good man had pyte and toke
and bare her in to his hows and leyd her before
the fyre / and so moche he dyd that she
came ageyne in to her strengthe and vygour /
She beganne thynne to crye and whyftled about
the hows and troubled the good wyf / and the
children / wherfor this good man wold haue her
oute of his hows / And whanne he thoughte to
have take her she sprange after his neck for to
have strangled hym / And thus hit is of the
euyl folk whiche for the good done to them /
they yeld ageyne euyl and deceyuen them whiche
have had pyte on them / And also theyre felau-
ship is not good ne vtile /

¶ The xj fable is of the lyon and of the asse



For them whiche mocken other esope
reherceth such a fable. Ther was
an asse which met with a lyon to
whom he said my broder god
saue the & the lyon shaked his
hede and with grete payne he myght hold his
courage / to have forth with deuoured hym /
But the lyon sayd to hym self / It behoueth not
that teethe soo noble and so fayre as myn be
touchen not / ne byten suche a fowle beest / For
he that is wyse must not hurte the foole ne take
hede to his wordes / but lete hym go for suche
as he is

¶ The xij fable is of the two rats



Etter worthe is to lyue in pouerte
 surely / than to lyue rychely beyng
 euer in daunger / Wherof Esope
 telleth fuche a fable / There were
 two rats wherof the one was grete
 and fatte / and held hym in the celer of a Ryche
 man And the other was poure and lene / ¶ On
 a daye this grete and fat ratte wente to sporte
 hym in the feldes and mette by the way the
 poure rat / of the whiche he was receyued as
 well as he coude in his poure cauerne or hole /
 and gaf from of fuche mete as he had / Thenne
 sayd the fatte ratte come thow wyth me / And
 I shalle gyue the wel other metes / He went
 with hym in to the toune / and enterd bothe
 into the celer of the ryche man / the whiche
 celer was full of alle goodes / And when they
 were within the grete rat presented and gaf to
 the poure rat of the delycious metes / saying thus
 to hym / Be mery and make good chere / and
 ete and drynke Joyously / ¶ And as they were
 etynge / the bouteler of the place came in to the
 celer / & the grete rat fled anon in to his hole /
 &

& the poure rat wist not whyther he shold goe
ne flee / But hyd hym behynd the dore with
grete fere and drede / and the bouteler turned
ageyne and sawe hym not / And whan he was
5 gone the fatte rat cam out of his cauerne or
hole / and called the poure ratte / whiche yet
was shakynge for fere / and said to hym / come
hyder and be not aferd / & ete as moche as thou
wylt / And the poure rat sayd to hym / for
10 goddes loue lete me go oute of this celer / For I
haue better ete some corne in the feldes and lyue
surely / than to be ever in this torment / for thou
arte here in grete doubte & lyuest not surely /
And therefore hit is good to lyue pourely &
15 surely For the poure lyueth more surely than
the ryche

¶ The xiiij fable is of the Egle and of the foxe



How the puyffant & myghty must
doubte the feble Esope reherceth
to vs fuche a fable / Ther was an
Egle whiche came ther as young
foxes were / and took away one of
them / and gaf hit to his younge Egles to fede
them with / The foxe wente after hym & praid
hym to restore and gyue hym ageyne his yong
foxe / and the Egle faid that he wold not / For he
was ouer hym lord and maister / ¶ And thenne
the foxe fulle of shrewdnes and malyce beganne
to put to gyder grete habondaunce of straws
round aboute the tree / where vpon the egle and
his yonge were in theyr nest / and kyndeled it
with fyre / ¶ And whan the smoke and the
flambe began to ryse vpward / the Egle ferd-
fulle and doubtyng the dethe of her lytylle egles
restored ageyne the younge foxe to his moder
¶ This fable sheweth vs / how the myghty men
oughte not to lette in ony thyng the small folke /
For the lytyle ryght ofte may lette and trouble
the grete

¶ The xiiij fable is of the Eagle whiche bare a
nutte in his becke and of the rauen



He that is sure and wel garnysshed yet
by fals counceyll may be betrayed /
wherof Esope telleth suche a fable /
¶ An Eagle was somtyme vpon a
tree / whiche held with his bylle
a nutte / whiche he coulde not breke / the rauen
came to hym / and sayd / Thow shalt neuer
breke it / tylle thow fleest as hyghe as thow ¹⁰
mayst / and thenne late it falle vpon the stones /
And the Eagle beganne to flyhe and lete fall his
proye / and thus he lost his notte / ¶ And thus
many one ben deceyued thorughe fals counceyll /
and by the fals tongue of other ¹⁵

¶ The xv fable is of the rauen and of the foxe



Hey that be glad and Joyefull of the
 prayfynge of flaterers oftyme re-
 pente them therof / wherof Esope
 reherceth to us fuche a fable / A
 rauen whiche was vpon a tree /
 and held with his bylle a chese / the whiche
 chese the fox defyred moche to haue / wherfore
 the foxe wente and preyfed hym by fuche wordes
 as folowen / O gentyll rauen thow art the fayrest
 byrd of alle other byrdes / For thy fethers ben so
 fayr so bright and so resplendysshynge / and can
 also so wel fynge / yf thow haddest the voys clere
 and small thow sholdest be the moost happy of
 al other byrdes / And the foole whiche herd the
 flateryringe wordes of the foxe beganne to open
 his bylle for to fynge / And then the chese fylle
 to the grounde / and the fox toke and ete hit /
 And whan the rauen sawe that for his vayn
 glorie he was deceyued wexed hevy and sorow-
 full / and repented hym of that he had byleued
 the foxe / And this fable techeth vs / how men
 ought not to be glad ne take reioysshynge in the
 wordes of caytyf folke / ne also to leue flatery ne
 vayn glory

¶ The xvi fable is of the lyon / of the wyld
bore / of the hole & of the asse



Whanne a man hath lost his dignyte or
offyce / he muste leue his fyrst audu-
cyte or hardynes / to thende / that
he be not iniuryed and mocked of
euery one / wherof Esope sheweth
vnto fuche a fable / There was a lyon whiche
in his yongthe was fyers and moche outragious /
¶ And when he was come to his old age / there
came to hym a wyldbore / whiche with his
teeth rent and barst a grete pyece of his body
and auenged upon hym of the wrong the lyon
had doo to hym before that tyme / ¶ After
came to hym the boole whiche smote and hurted
hym with his hornes / And an asse came there /
whiche smote hym in the forhede with his feete
by maner of vyndycacion / And thenne the poure
Lyon beganne to wepe sayenge within hym self
in this manere / When I was yonge and uertuous
euery one doubted and fered me / and now that
I am old and feble / and nyghe to my dethe /
none is that setteth ne holdeth ought by me /
but of euery one I am setten aback / I haue lost
alle

alle good and worship / and therfore this fable
admonefteth many one whiche ben enhaunced
in dygnyte and worship fhewinge to them / how
they muft be meke and humble / For he that
geteth and acquyreth no frendes ought to be
doubtous to falle in fuche caas and in fuche
peryl

¶ The xviij fable is of the asse and of the
yong dogge



None ought to entermete hym of that
what he can not do wherof Esope
recyted suche a fable / Of an asse
whiche was in the hows of a lord /
whiche lord had a lytyle dogge /
whiche he loued wel / and gaf hym mete and
ete vpon his table / And the lytyle dogge loked
and chered / and lepte vpon his gowne / And to
alle them that were in the hows he made chere /
wherfor

wherfor the asse was enuyous and sayd in hym
 self / yf my lord and his meyny loue this myf-
 chaunt beste by cause that he chereth and maketh
 feste to euery body / by gretter reason they ought
 to loue me yf I make chere to them / Thenne
 sayd he in hym self / Fro henforth I shall take
 my disporte and shall make Joye and playe
 with my lord / and wyth his meyny / And ones
 as the asse was in this thoughte and ymagyna-
 cion / hit happed that he sawe his lord whyche
 entryd in to his hows / the asse beganne thenne
 to daunse and to make feest and songe with his
 fwete voys / and approched hym self toward his
 lord & went & lepte vpon his sholders / and
 beganne to kyffe and to lykke hym / The lord
 thenne beganne to crye oute with a hyghe voys
 and sayd / lete this fowl and payllard / whiche
 hurteth and byteth me fore / be bete and putt
 away / The lordes seruauntes thenne toke anone
 grete staues / and beganne to smyte vpon the
 poure asse / and so fore corryged and bete hym /
 that after he had no luste ne courage to daunse /
 ne make to nonne chere ne feste / and therefore
 none ought to entermete hym self for to doo a
 thyng / whiche as for hym impossyble is to be
 done / For the vnwyse displeseth there / where
 as he supposeth to please

¶ The xviij fable is of the lyon and of
the rat /



He myghte and puyffant must par-
donne and forgyue to the lytyll
and feble / and ought to kepe hym
fro al euylle / For oftyme the lytyll
may wel gyue ayde and help to
the grete / wherof Esope reherceth to vs fuche a
fable Of a lyon whiche flepte in a forest and the
10 rats desported and playd aboute hym / It happed
that the rat wente vpon the lyon / wherfore the
lyon awoke / and within his clawes or ongles he
tooke the rat / ¶ And whanne the rat sawe hym
thus taken & hold sayd thus to the lyon / My
15 lord pardonne me / For of my deth noughte ye
shalles wyne / For I supposed not to haue done
to yow ony harme ne displayfyre / ¶ Thenne
thought the lyon in hym self that no worship ne
glorye it were to put it to dethe / wherfor he
20 graunted his pardonne and lete hym go within
a lytyll whyle / After this it happed so that the
same lyon was take at a grete trappe / and as he
sawe hym thus caught and taken / he beganne
to crye and make sorowe / and then whan the
rat

rat herd hym crye / he approched hym & demaunded of hym wherfor he cryed / And the lyon anfuerd to hym / Seest thou not how I am take & bound with this gynne / Thenne fayd the ratte to hym / My lord I wyll not be vnkynde / but euer I shal remembre the grace whiche thou hast done to me / And if I can I shall now helpe the / The ratte beganne thenne to byte the lace or cord / and so long he knawed it that the lace brake / And thus the lyon escaped / ¶ Therefore this fable techeth vs how that a man myghty and puyffant ought not to dysprayse the lytyll / For somtyme he that can no body hurte ne lette may at a nede gyue help and ayde to the grete

¶ The xix fable is of the mylan whiche was
seke and of his moder



He that euer doth euylle ought not
to suppose ne haue no trust that
his prayer at his nede shalle be
herd / Of the whiche thyng Esope
sheweth to us suche a fable / Of
a mylan whiche was seke / so moche that he had
no truste to recouer his helthe / And as he sawe
hym so vexed with feblenes / he prayd his moder
that she shold praye vnto the goddes for hym /
And his moder answered to hym / My sone thou
hast so gretely offendyd and blasphemyd the
goddes that now they wol auenge them on the /
For thou preyest not them by pyte ne by loue /
but for dolour and drede / For he whiche ledeth
euylle lyf / and that in his euylle delynge is ob-
stynate / ought not to haue hope to be delyuered
of his euyl / For whan one is fall into extremyte
of his sekenes / thenne is the tyme come that he
must be payed of his Werkes and dedes / For he
that offendeth other in his prosperyte / whan he
falleth in to aduersyte / he fyndeth no frendes /

¶ The xx fable maketh mencion of the swalowe /
and other byrdes



HE that byleueth not good counceyll /
may not fayll to be euylle coun-
ceyllled / wherof Esope reherceth
to vs fuche a fable / Of a plowgh
man / whiche sowed lynseed / and
the swalowe seyng that of the same lynseed men
myght make nettes and gynnes / wente and sayd
to al other byrdes / Come with me ye al & lete
vs plucke vp al this / For yf we leue hit growe /
the labourer shal mowe make therof gunnes and
nettes for to take vs al / Alle the byrdes desprayed
his councyl / ¶ And thenne as the swalowe
sawe this / he wente and herberowed her in the
plowgh mans hows / ¶ And whanne the flaxe
was growen and pulled vp / the labourer made
gynnes and nettes to take byrdes / wherwith he
took euery day many other byrdes / and brought
them to his hows / to the whiche byrdes the
swalowe thenne sayd / I told yow wel / what
that shold happe therof / wherfore men ought
not to despraye good councylle / For he that is
euyl aduyfed and not wel cunceyled shalle haue
moche payne

¶ Here fynygsshed the fyrst booke of Esope /

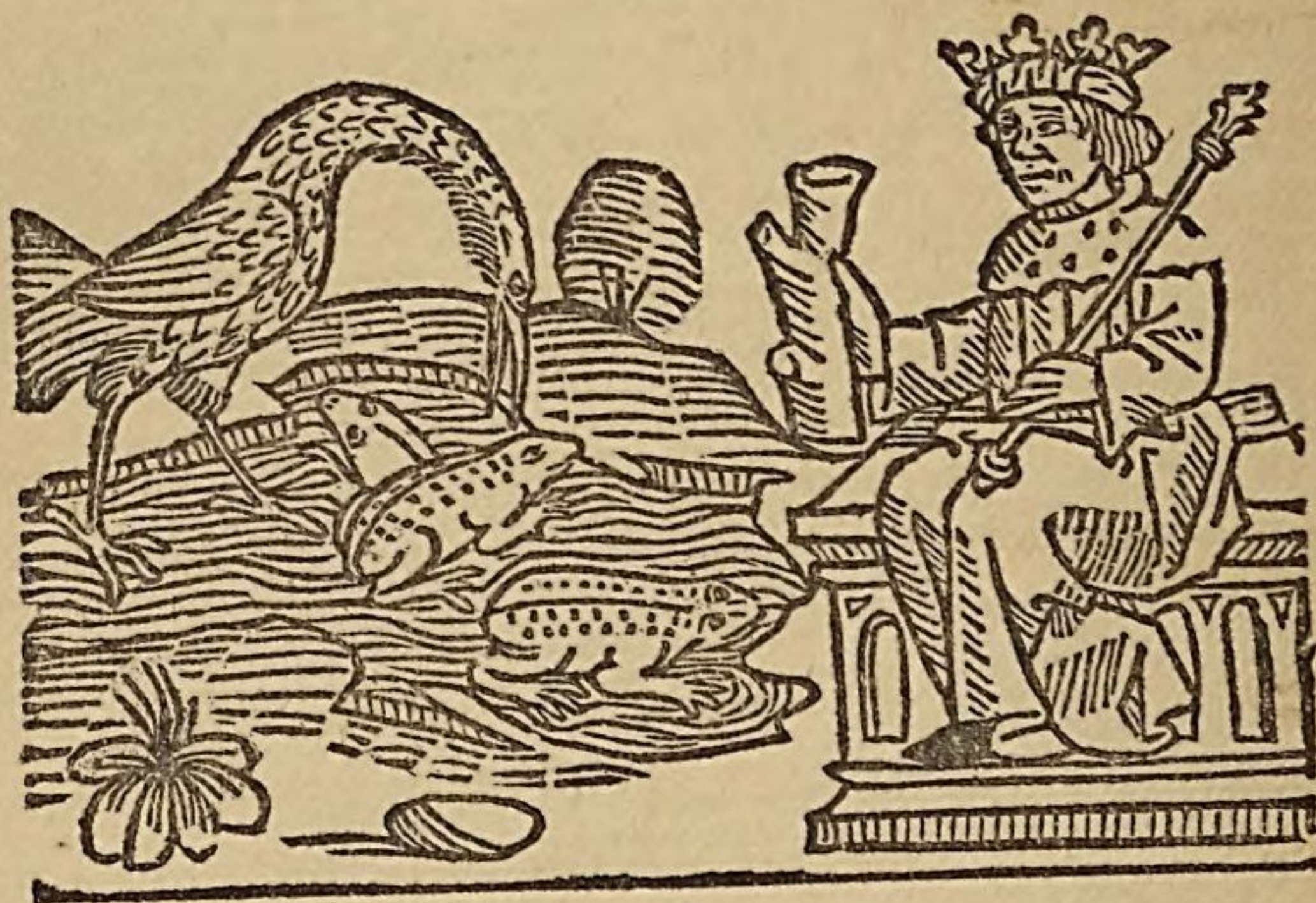
¶ Here foloweth the prohemye of the second book
of fables of esope / man wyse subtile and
Engenyous



le maner of fables ben found for to
shewe al maner of folk / what⁵
maner of thyng they ought to
ensyewe and folowe / ¶ And also
what maner of thyng they must
and ought to leue and flee / for fable is as
moche to seye in poeterye / as wordes in theo-¹⁰
logye / ¶ And therfor I shalle wryten fables
for to shewe the good condycions of the good
men / for the lawe hath be gyuen for the tref-
pacers or mysdoers / And by cause the good ond
Juste be not subget to the lawe as we fynde and¹⁵
rede of alle the Athenyens / the whiche lyued
after the lawe of Kynde / And also they lyued
at theyr lyberte / but by theyre wylle wold haue
demaunded a kynge for to punyssh alle the
euyl / but by cause they were not customed to²⁰
be reformed ne chaastyed / whan ony of them
was corrected / and punysshed / they were gretely
troubled / whan theyr newe kynge made Justyce /
For by cause that before that tyme they had
neuer

neuer be vnder no mans subjection / and was grete charge to them to be in feruytude / wherefore they were sorowful that euer they had demanded ony thyng / ageynst the whiche esope reherceth fuche a fable whiche is the fyrst and formeft of this second book

¶ The fyrst fable is of the frogges and of
Juppyter



Nothing is so good as to lyue Justly
and at lyberte For fredome and
lyberte is better than ony gold or
syluer / wherof Esope reherceth
to vs suche a fable / There were
frogges whiche were in dyches and pondes at
theyre lyberte / they alle to gyder of one assente
& of one wylle maade a request to Jupiter that
he wold gyue them a kynge / And Jupyter be-
ganne

ganne therof to merueylle / And for theyr kyng
he casted to them a grete pyece of wood / whiche
maade a grete sowne and noyse in the water /
wherof alle the frogges had grete drede and
fered moche / And after they approched to theyr
kyng for to make obeyffaunce vnto hym / ¶ And
whanne they perceyued that hit was but a pyece
of wood / they torned ageyne to Jupiter prayenge
hym swetely that he wold gyue to them another
kyng / And Jupiter gaf to them the Heron for
to be theyr kyng / And then the Heron beganne
to entre in to the water / and ete them one after
other / And whanne the frogges sawe that theyr
kyng destroyed / and ete them thus / they beganne
tendyrly to wepe / sayeng in this manere to the
god Jupiter / Ryght hyghe and ryght myghte
god Jupiter please the to delyuere vs fro the
throate of this dragon and fals tyraunt which eteth
vs the one after another / And he sayd to them /
the kyng whiche ye haue demounded shalle be
your mayster / For whan men haue that / which
men oughte to haue / they ought to be ioyful
and glad And he that hath lyberte ought to kepe
hit wel / For nothyng is better than lyberte / For
lyberte shold not be wel fold for alle the gold
and syluer of all the world

¶ The second fable is of the Columbes or douues
of the kyte and of the sperehawke



Ho that putte and submytteth hym
felf vnder the saue gard or protec-
tion of the euylle / thou oughtest
to wete & knowe / that whan he
asketh & demanded ayde & helpe /
he geteth none / ¶ Wherof Esope reherceth to
vs suche a fable / Of the douues whiche de-
maunded a sperehawke for to be theyr kynge /
for to kepe them fro the kyte or mylan / And
whanne the sperehawke was maade kynge ouer
them / he beganne to deuoure them / the whiche
columbes or douues sayd amonge them / that
better it were to them to suffre of the kyte than
to be vnder the subjection of the sperehawke /
& to be martyred as we be / but therof we be
wel worthy / For we oure self ben cause of this
meschyef / And therefore whanne men done ony
thyng / men ought well to loke and consydere
thende of hit / For he dothe prudently and
wyfely whiche taketh good hede to the ende

¶ The thyrde fable is of the theef and of the
dogge



Hanne that one gyueth ony thyng /
men ought wel to take hede / to
what ende hit is gyuen / wherof
Esope reherceth fuche a fable /
Of a theef which came on a nygt
within a mans hows for to haue robbed hym /
And the good mans dogge beganne to bark at
hym / And thenne the theef casted at hym a
pyece of brede / And the dogge sayd to hym /
thow castest not this brede for no good wyll /
but only to the ende / that I hold my pees / to
thende that thou mayst robbe my mayster / and
therfore hit were not good for me / that for a
morfell of brede / I shold lese my lyf / wherfore
goo fro hens / or els I shalle anone awake my
mayster and alle his meyne / The dogge theynne
beganne to bark / and the theef beganne to flee /
And thus by couetyse many one haue oftyme
receyued grete yestes / the whiche haue been
cause of theyr dethe and to lese theyre heedes /

¶ Wherfore

¶ Wherefore hit is good to confydere and loke
wel / to what entencion the yeft in gyuen / to
thende that none may be betrayd thurgh yeftes /
ne that by ony yeftes none maketh some trayfon
ageynst his mayster or lord

The fourthe maketh mencyon of the sowe
and of the wulf



is not good to byleue all fuche
thynges as men may here / wherof
Esoppe sayeth fuche a fable / Of a
wulf whiche came toward a sowe
whiche wepte and made sorowe
for the grete payne that she felte / by cause she
wold make her young pygges / And the wulf
came to her sayeng / My suster make thy yonge
pygges surely / for ioyously and with good wyll /
I shalle helpe & serue the / And the sowe sayd
thenne to hym / go forth on thy waye / for I
haue no nede ne myster of fuche a seruaunt / For
as longe as thou shalt stonde here I shal not
delyuere me of my charge / For other thyng
thou desyrest not / than to haue and ete them /
The wulf then wente / and the sowe was anone
delyuerd of her pygges / For yf she had byleuyd
hym she had done a sorowful byrthe / And thus
he that folyshly byleueth it happeth to hym

¶ The fyfthe fable maketh mencyon of the
montayn whiche fhoke



Yght so it happeth / that he that
menaceth hath drede and is ferd-
ful / wherof Esope reherceth to vs
suche a fable Of a hylle whiche
beganne to tremble and shake by
cause of the molle whiche delued hit / And whanne
the folke sawe that the erthe beganne thus to
shake / they were sore aferd and dredeful / and
durst not wel come ne approche the hylle / But
after whanne they were come nyghe to the mon-
tayne / & knewe how the molle caused this hylle
shakynge / theyr doubte and drede were con-
uerted vnto Joye / and beganne alle to lawhe /
And therfore men ought not to doubte al folk
which ben of grete wordes and menaces / For
some menacen that haue grete doubte

¶ The vi fable is of the wulf and of the lambe



He byrth causeth no so moche to gete
 some frendes / as doth the good-
 nes / wherof Esope reherceth to vs
 fuche a fable / Of a wulf whiche
 sawe a lambe among a grete herd
 of gootes / the whiche lambe sowked a gote /
 And the wulf wente and sayd to hym / this gote
 is not thy moder / goo and seke her at the Mon-
 tain / for she shalle nouryshe the more swetely
 and more tendyrly than this gote shalle / And
 the lambe ansuerd to hym / This goote nouryssheth
 me instede of my moder / For she leneth to me
 her pappes soner than to ony of her own chil-
 dren / And yet more / hit is better for me to be
 here with these gootes than to departe fro hens /
 and to falle in to thy throte for to be deuoured /
 And therefore he is a foole whiche leueth fredome
 or surete / For to put hym self in grete perylle
 and daunger of dethe / For better is to lyue
 surely and rudely in fewrte than swetely in peryll
 & daunger

¶ The vii fable speketh of the old dogge and
of his mayster



Men ought not to dysprayse the aun-
cyent ne to putte a bak / For yf
thow be yonge / thow oughte to
desyre to come to old age or aun-
cyente / and also thow ouztest to
loue and prayse the fayttes or dedes whiche they
haue done in theyr yongthe / wherof Esope re-
herceth to vs suche a fable / Of a lord whiche
had a dogge / the whiche dogge had be in his
yonghe of good kynde / For ye wote wel / that
of kynde the dogges chacen and hunt in theyr
yongthe / and haue grete luste to renne and take
the wyld beestes / whan thenne this dogge was
come to old age / and that he myght no more
renne / It happeth ones that he lete scape and go
fro hym an hare / wherfore his mayster was sorow-
full and angry / and by grete wrathe beganne to
bete hym / The dogge sayd thenne to hym / My
mayster / of good seruyse thow yeldest to me
euylle gwerdone & reward / For in my yonge
age I serued the ful wel / And now that I am
comen to myn old age / thow betest and setteest
me

me a bak / haue memorye how in myn yong
age / I was fstronge and lusty / And how I made
grete outrages and effors / the whiche caused my
yongthe / And now when I am bycome old and
feble thow setteft nought of me / ¶ This fable
techeth that who so euer doth ony good in his
yongthe / in his auncyente and old age he shalle
not contynue in the vertues which he posseded
in his yong age

¶ The viij fable is of the hares and of the
frogges



En say conynly that after that the
tyme goth / so must folke go / For
yf thow makest destinction of the
tyme thow shalt wel accord the
Scryptures / wherof Esope reher-
ceth to vs fuche a fable / And sayth thus / that
he whiche beholdeth the euylle of other / must
haue pacyence of the euylle that maye come
vpon hym / For somtyme as a hunter chaced
thurgh the feldes and woodes / the hares beganne
to flee for fere And as they ranne / they adressyd
them in to a medowe fulle of frogges / ¶ And
whanne the frogges herd the hares renne they
beganne also to flee and to renne fast / And thenne
a hare whiche perceyued them so ferdfull sayd
to alle his felawes / Lete us no more be dredeful
ne doubtuous / for we be not alone that haue had
drede / For alle the frogges ben in doubte / and
haue fere and drede as we haue / Therefore we
ought not to despayre / but haue trust and hope
to lyue / And yf somme aduersyte cometh vpon
us / we must bere it pacyently / For ones the
tyme

tyme fhalle come that we fhalle be oute of payne
and oute of all drede / Therefore in the vnhappy
and Infortunat tyme men ought not to be def-
payred / but oughte euer to be in good hope to
haue ones better in tyme of prosperyte / For after
grete werre cometh good pees / And after the
rayne cometh the fair weder x

¶ The ix fable maketh mencyon of the wulf
and of the kydde



Good Children ought to obserue and
kepe euer the comaundements of
theyr good parents and frendes /
wherof Esope reciteth to vs suche
a fable / Of a gote whiche had
made her yonge kyde / and honger toke her soo
that she wold haue gone to the felde for to ete
some grasse / wherfore she sayd to her kyde / My¹⁰
child / beware wel / that yf the wulf come hyder
to ete the / that thou opene not the dore to hym
¶ And whanne the gote was gone to the felde /
came the wulf to the dore / And faynyng the
gotes voyce sayd to the kydde / My child opene¹⁵
to me the dore / And thenne the kydde answered to
hym / goo hens euylle and fals beste / For well
I see the thurgh that hole / But for to haue me
thow faynest the voyce of my moder / ¶ And
therefore I shalle kepe me well fro openyng of²⁰
ony dore of this hows / And thus the good chil-
dren ought euer to kepe wel / and put in theyr
hert & memory the doctryne and the techyng of
theyr parentes / For many one is vndone and lost
for faulte of obedyence²⁵

¶ The tenth fable is of the good man and
of the serpente



HE that ought not to be asswerd that
applyketh and setteth hym to doo
somme other eny euyl / wherof
esope reherceth suche a fable / Of
a serpent / whiche wente & came
into the hows of a poure man / which serpent
lyued of that whiche felle fro the poure mans
table / For the whiche thyng happed a grete
fortune to this poure man and bycame moche
ryche / But on a daye this man was angry
ageynste the serpent / and took a grete staf / and
smote at hym / and gretely hurted him / wherfore
the serpente wente oute of his hous And therein
he came neuer ageyne / And within a lytyll
whyle after this / this man retourned and felle
ageyne in to grete pouerte / And thenne he
knewe that by the fortune of the Serpent he was
bycome ryche / and repented hym moche of that
he smote the serpent / And thenne this poure
man wente and hūbled hym before the serpent
sayenge to hym / I praye the that thow wylt par-
donne me of thoffense that I have done to the /

¶ And

¶ And thenne sayd the serpente to the poure man / Syth thow repentest the of thy mysdede / I pardonne and forgyue it to the / But as longe as I shalle be on lyue / I shalle remember me of thy malyce / For as thow hurtest me ones / thow maest as wel hurte me another tyme / For the wounde that thow madeest to me / may not forgete the euylle whiche thow hast done to me wherfore he that was ones euylle / shalle euer be presumed & holden for euylle / And therfore men ought to presume ouer hym / by whome they receyue somme damage and not haue suspecte theyr good and trewe frendes

¶ The xi fable is of the herte / of the sheep &
of the wulf



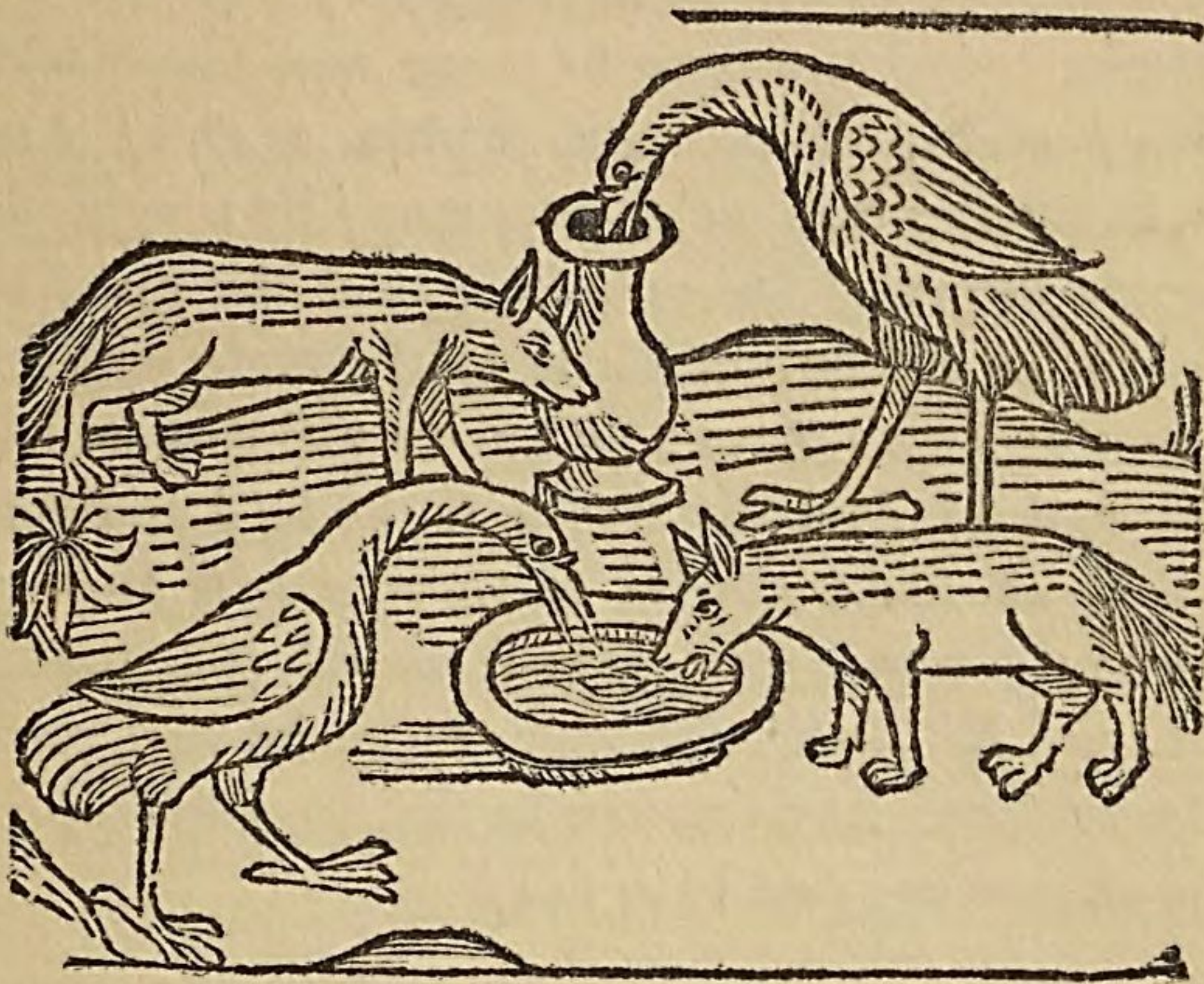
He thyng which is promysed by
force & for drede is not to be
hold / wherof esope reherceth fuche
a fable of a hert which in the
presence of a wulf demūaded of
a sheep that she shold paye a busshel of corn /
And the wulf commaūded to the sheep to paye
hit / And whanne the day of payment was come
the herte came and demaunded of the sheep his
corn And the sheep sayd to hym / the conenaunces
and pactyons made by drede and force oughte
not to be holden / For it was force to me beyng
to fore the wulf to promytte & graunte to gyue
to the that whiche thou neuer lenest to me / And
therfor thou shalt haue ryght nought of me /
wherfore somtyme it is good to make promisse
of some thyng for to eschewe gretter dommage
or losse / For the thyngs whiche are done by
force haue none fydelyte x

C The xij fable is of the balled man /
and of the flye /



F a lytyl euylle may wel come a
gretter / Wherof Esope recyteth
suche a fable / Of a flye / whiche
pryked a man vpon his bald hede /
And whanne he wold have smyte
her / she flewgh away / And thus he smote hym
self / wherof the fly beganne to lawhe / And the
bald man sayd to her / Ha a euylle beest thou
demaundest wel thy dethe / yf I smote my self
wherof thou lawhest and mocquest me / But yf I
had hytte the / thou haddest be therof slayne /
And therefore men sayen comynly that of the
euylle of other / men ought not to lawhe ne
scorne / But the Iniuryous mocquen and scornen
the world / and geteth many enemyes / For the
whiche cause oftyme it happeth that of a fewe
wordes euyll sette / cometh a grete noyse and
daunger

¶ The xiiij fable is of the foxe and of the storke



How oughtest not to doo to other
that whiche thow woldest not that
men shold doo to the / wherof
Esop reherceth to vs fuche a
fable / Of a foxe whiche conueyed
a storke to souper / And the foxe put the mete
vpon a trauncher / the whiche mete the storke
myght not ete / wherof she tooke & had grete
displayfaunce / & wente & departed oute of the
foxes

D

foxes hows al hungry and wente geyne to her
lodgys / and by cause that the foxe had thus
begyled her / she bythoughte in her self / how
she myght begyle the Foxe / For as men saye /
it is meryte to begyle the begylers / wherfore the
storke prayd the foxe to come and soupe with
her / and put his mete within a glas / And
whanne the foxe wold haue eten / he myght not
come ther by / but only he lycked the glas / by
cause he cowde not reche to the mete with his
mouthe / And thenne he knewe wel that he was
deceyued / And thenne the storke sayd to hym /
Take of fuche goodes as thou gauest to me /
And the poure foxe ryght shameful departed fro
thens / And with the staf whiche he had made
he was bete And therefore he that begyleth other /
is oftyme begyled hym self /

¶ The xiiij fable is of the wulf and of the
dede mans hede



Any one ben whiche haue grete
worship and glorie / but noo pru-
dence / ne noo Wyfedom they haue
in them wherof Esope reherceth
suche a fable / Of a wulf which
found a dede mans hede / the whiche he torned
vp so doune with his foote / And sayd / Ha a
how fayr hast thou be and playfaunt / And now
thou hast in the neyther wytte / ne beaute / &
yet thou arte withoute voys and withoute ony
thought / and therefore men ought not only to
behold the beaute and fayrenesse of the body /
but only the goodnes of the courage / For som-
tyme men gyuen glorie and worship to some /
whiche haue not deseruyd to haue hit /

¶ The xv fable is of the Jaye and of the pecok



One ought to were and putte on hym the gowne of other / wherof Esope reherceth to vs suche a fable Of a Jaye full of vayne glory / whiche tooke and putte on hym the fethers of a pecok / and with them he a[d]ourned / and arayed hym self well / And whanne he was wel dresyd and arayed / by his outrecuydaunce or ouerwenynge wold haue gone and conuersed amonge the pecoks / and desprayed alle his felawes / And whanne the pecokes knewe that he was not of theyr kynd / they anone plucked of alle his fethers / and smote and bete hym by suche maner / that no fethers abode vpon hym / And he fledde away al naked and bare /

¶ And thenne whanne his felawes sawe hym / they sayd to hym / What gallaunt come hyther / where ben thy fayre fethers / whiche thou haddest but late a gone / Hast thou no shame ne vergoyne to come in oure companye /

And thenne alle the byrdes cam vpon hym / and smote & bete hym / sayenge thus to hym /
yf

yf thou haddeſt be content of thyn owne veſty-
mentes / thow hadeſt not come to this vylony /
Ther for hit appereth that hit is not good to
were another mans gowne / For ſuche weren
fayre gownes and fayr gyrdels of gold that haue
theyr teeth cold at home

¶ The xvj fable is of the mule and of the flye.



Omme maken gretemenaces / whiche
 haue no myghte / ¶ Wherof Esope
 reheryeth fuche a fable / ¶ Of a
 carter / whiche ladde a Charyot
 or carte / whiche a Mule drewe
 forth / And by cause the Mule wente not fast
 ynough / the flye sayd to the Mule / Ha a payllart
 Mule / why goost thou not faster / I shalle soo
 egrely pryke the / that I shalle make the go
 lyghtely / ¶ And the Mule answered to the
 flye / God kepe and preferue the mone for the
 wolues / For I haue ne grete drede ne fere of
 the / But I drede and doubte fore my mayster /
 whiche is vpon me / whiche constrayneth me to
 fulfyll his wylle / ¶ And more I oughte to
 drede and doubte hym more / than the / whiche
 arte nought / and of no valewe ne myght /
 ¶ And thus men ought not to gette by ne
 double them / whiche haue no myght ne that
 ben of no valewe ¶

¶ The xviij fable is of the ante and the flye.



O make boost and auauntynge is but
vayne glorye and folye / wherof
Esopo recyteth suche a fable / Of
the ante or formyce and of the
flye / whiche stryued to gyder /
for to wete whiche was the most noble of
them bothe / & the flye sayd to the formyce /
Come hyder formyce / wylt thou compare thy
self to me that dwelle in the kynges places and
palays / and ete and drynke at theyr table / And
also I kyffe bothe kynge and quene / and the
most fayre maydens / and thou poure and myf-
chaunt beest thou arte euer within the erthe /
And the formyce ansuerd to the flye / Now
knowe I wel thy vanyte and folye / ¶ For thou
auauntest the of that wherof thou sholest des-
praise the /

For fro alle places where as thou goost or
flyest / thou arte hated chaced and put oute / and
lyuest in grete daunger / for assone as the wynter
shal come thou shalt deye / And I shal abyde
on lyue alone within my chamber or hole /
where as I drynke and ete at my playfyr / For
the

the wynter shalle not forgyue to the thy myf-
dede / but he shalle flee the / ¶ And thus he
that wyllle mocque or despreyse somme other /
he ougt fyrst to loke and behold on hym self
wel / For men fayn comynly / who that be-
holdeth in the glas / well he seeth hym self /
¶ And who seeth hym self / wel he knoweth hym
self / And who that knowith hym self / lytel he
preyseth hym self / ¶ And who that preyseth
hym self lytyll / he is ful wyse and sage.

¶ The xviij fable is of the wulf / of the foxe /
and of the ape



Hence that ones falleth in to somme
euylle faytte or dede / he shalle
euer lyue with deshonour and in
suspecion / of the peple / ¶ And
how be it that by aduenture he
purposed to doo somme prouffitable thyng to
somme other / yet he shold not be trusted ne
byleued / wherof Esope reherceth to vs suche a
fable / Of a wulf whiche maade the foxe to be
cyted before the Ape / ¶ And the wulf sayd
that the foxe was but a theef and a payllart and
a knaue of poure folke / And the foxe sayd that
he lyed / and that he was a good and trewe man /
And that he dyde moche good /

¶ And thenne the Ape whiche was sette as
a Juge / gaf suche a sentence / and sayd to the
wulf / Come hyther / thou hast not lost al that
whiche thou demaundest / ¶ And thou Foxe
I beleue wel that thou hast vsurped and robbed
som thyng / howe be it / that thou denyest hit
in Justyce / But for as moche that pees may be
bytwexe yow bothe / ye shalle parte to gyder
your

your good / to thende / that none of yow haue
no hole parte / For he that is wonte and acuf-
tomed to robbe and gnawe / with grete payne he.
may abſteyne hym ſelf fro hit / For a begyler
wylle euer begyle other / ¶ And by cauſe that
the ape felte them bothe gulty and ſuſpycious (he)
made theyr dyfference to be acorded / and parted
half by half / For they that ben cuſtomed to doo
ony frawde or falſhede / ſhall euer lyue rygte
heuyly and in ſuſpycon x

¶ The xix fable is of the man and of the
wesel



En ought wel to loke and behold the
courage & thought of hym / whiche
dothe good / and the ende / wher-
for he dothe hit / wherof Esope
reherceth fuche a fable / Of a man
whiche tooke a wesele / the whiche chaced after
the rattes wythynne his hows / ¶ And after
whanne he had taken her / he wold haue kylled
her / ¶ And whanne the poure Wesele sawe
the wrathe and furour of her mayster / she cryed
to hym / mercy / sayenge thus / My lord I re-
quyre and praye the / that thou wylt pardonne
to me / and that thou wylt reward me of the
grete seruyse whiche I haue done to the / For
euer I haue chaced the rats oute of thy hows /

¶ And the man sayd to her / thou dydest not
that for the loue of me / but only thou hast done
it for to fylle thy bely For yf thou haddest done
it for the loue of me / I shold haue pardonned to
the / ¶ And by cause that thou dydest not for
to serue me / but for to lette and adōmage me /
For that the rattes myght not ete / thou barest
it

it away / And soo bycause / that thow arte wexed
fatte of myne owne brede / thow must rendre
and geue to me alle the fatnesse / whiche thou
haft conquered and goten here / For he that
robbeth shall be robbed / Juxta illud / pellatores
pillabuntur / For hit suffyseth not to doo wel /
but men must haue good wylle and good enten-
cion for to do hit / For an almesse that is done
for vayne glorye / is not merited / but dismeryted /
wherfore I shal not pardonne the / but incon-
tynent and withoute taryenge thow shalt deye /
For by cause that thow haft deseruyd no mercy /
thow shalt now be putte to dethe x

¶ The xx fable maketh mencion of the Oxe / and
of the frogge / whiche wold haue compared
her to hym



He poure ought not to compare hym
self to hym which is ryche and
myghty / As sayth this fable of a
frogge / whiche was in a medowe /
when she aspyed and sawe an oxe
whiche pastured / She wold make her self as grete
and as myghty as the oxe / and by her grete
pryde she beganne to swelle ageynste the oxe /
And denaunded of his children yf she was not
as grete as the oxe and as myghty / And their
children ansuerd and sayd nay moder / For to
loke and behold on the oxe / it semeth of yow to
be nothyng / And thenne the frogge beganne
more to swelle / ¶ And when the oxe sawe her
pryde / he thradde and thrested her with his fote /
and brake her bely / Therefore hit is not good to
the poure to compare hym self to the ryche /
Wherfore men sayn comynly / Swelle not thy
self / to thende that thou breste not

¶ Here fynnysshed the second booke of Esape /

¶ Here begynneth the thyrddde booke of the subtyle
fables of Esope / wherof the fyrste maketh
mencion / of the Iyon / & of the pastour or
herdman



He myghty and puyssant oughte not
to be slowfull of the benefetes
done to them by the lytyl and
smalle And oughte not also to for-
gete them / but that they may be
rewarded of them / ¶ And this fable approueth
esope & sheweth vnto vs / of a lyon whiche ranne
after a beest / and as he ranne / a thorne entred
into his foote / whiche hurted and greued hym
gretely / wherfore he mught no ferther goo /
but as wel as he cowde he came to a shepeherd
whiche kepte his sheep and beganne to flatere
with his taylle shewynge to hym hys foote / whiche
was sore hurted and wounded / The shepherd
was in grete drede and casted before the lyon
one of his sheep / But the lyon demaunded no
mete of hym / For more he desyred to be me-
dycyned and made hole of his foote / ¶ And
after whenne the shepherde sawe the wounde / he
with

with a nydle subtylly drewe oute of his foote the
thorne / and had oute of the wound alle the
roten flesshe / and enoynted hit with swete oyme-
ments / ¶ And anone the lyon was hole / And
for to haue rendryd graces and thankys to the
shepherd or pastour the lyon kyssed his handes /
And after he retorned ageyn in to the hiest of
the woode / And within a lytel whyle after it
happed that this lyon was taken and conueyed
to the Cyte of Rome and was put amonge the
other beestes for to deuoure the mysdoers / Now
it befelle that the sayd shepherd commysed a
crymynous dede / wherfore he was condempned
to be deuoured by these bestes / And ryght so as
he was cast among them the lyon knewe hym /
and beganne to behold on hym / and made to
hym chere and lykked hym with his tongue /
And preferued and kepte hym from alle the
other bestes / Thenne knewe the shepherd that
it was the lyon whiche he maade hole / And
that he wold thenne haue recompensed hym of
the good whiche he had done to hym / wherof
alle the Romainys were all wonderly abasshed /
And wold knowe the cause of hit And the
shepherd sayd to them as aboue is sayd /
¶ And whanne they knewe the cause / they
gaf leue to the shepherd / to goo home and
sente ageyne the lyon in to the forest / And
therefore

therfore this is notary and trewe that al maner
of folke ought to rendre and gyue thankynges
grace and mercye to theyr good doers/ For
flowfulnes is a fynne/ whiche is moche display-
faunt to god

¶ The second fable is of the lyon and of the hors



¶ Che one ought to eschewe dyffymy-
 lyng / for none ouzt to were on hym
 the skyn of the wulf / but that he
 wyll be lyke to hym / For none
 ougt to fayne hym self other than
 fuche as he is / As to vs reherceth this fable /
 ¶ Of a lyon whiche sawe a hors / whiche ete
 grasse in a medowe / And for to fynde somme
 subtylyte and manere for to ete and deuoure
 hym approched to hym / and sayd / God kepe
 the my broder / I am a leche / and with al a good
 phesycyen / ¶ And by cause that I see that
 thou hast a fore foote / I am come hyther for
 to hele the of hit / And the hors knewe wel
 all his euyell thought And sayd to the lyon /
 My broder I thanke the gretely / and thou arte
 welcome to me / I preye the that thou wylt
 make my foote hole / And thenne the lyon sayd
 to the hors / late see thy foote / And as the lyon
 looked on hit / the hors smote hym on the for-
 hede / In fuche wyse that he brake his hede and
 fyll oute of his mynde / & the lyon felle to the
 ground / and soo wonderly he was hurte / that
 almost

almost he myght not ryse vp ageyne / And thenne
fayd the lyon in hym self / I am wel worthy to
haue had this / For he that fercheth euylle /
euyll cometh to hym / And by cause that I
dyffymyled and fayned my self to be a medycyn /
where as I shold haue shewed mysel a grete
enemye / I therfore haue receyued good reward /
and therfore euery body oughte to shewe hym
self fuche as he is /

¶ The thyrd fable maketh mencion of the asse /
of the hors / & of theyr fortune



HE that is wel fortunèd and happy /
and is atte vppereft of the whele
of fortune / may wel falle doune /
And therefore none oughte to def-
praye the poure / but oughte to
thynke how the whele of fortune is moche
doubtous as shewethe this present fable / Of a
fayr hors whiche was wel harnayfed and arayed /
and his fadel and brydel garnysshed with gold /
whiche hors mete with an asse fore laden in a
narowe way / And by cause that the asse tourned
hym not a bak Incontynent the hors sayd to
hym / Ha a chorle hast thow noo shame ne ver-
goyne / that thow doste ne bereft none worshippe
ne reuerence vnto thy lord / who holdeth now
me / that wyth my foote I breke not thyn hede /
by cause that thow puttest not thy self asyde
and oute of my waye / so that I myght passe
& goo on my waye / The poure asse ansuerd
ne sayd to hym neuer a word / and was fore
aferd that the horse shold haue bete hym / wher-
fore

fore he held his pees as wyfe and fage / And
 the hors wente his waye / ¶ And within a lytyl
 whyl after / it befelle / that fortune tourned his
 whele vp fodoune / For thys fayre hors became
 old lene and feke / ¶ And whanne his mayster
 fawe that his hors was thus lene and feke and
 oute of prosperyte / he comaūded that he shold
 be had in to the toun and that in stede of his
 ryche fadel men shold put and sette on his
 backe a panyer for to bere dounge in to the
 felde / Now it happed that the asse whiche was
 in a medowe etyng grasse perceyued and fawe
 the hors and wel knewe hym / wherof he was
 wonder abasshed / and merueylled moche that
 he was thus poure and so lene bycome / ¶ And
 the asse went toward hym and sayd / Ha a felawe.
 where is now thy fayre fadel / and thy ryche
 brydel / garnysshed with gold / how arte thou
 now bycome soo lene and fuche a payllard /
 what haue prouffyt to the thy fayre and ryche
 rayments / and what auaylled now to thy grete
 fyrste and pryde / and thy grete pretumpcion
 whiche ones thou shewest to me / Thynke now /
 how thou arte lene and vnthryfty / and how
 thou and I ben now of one offyce / And the
 myserable and vnhappy hors was abasshed / and
 for shame loked downward / & anfuerd neuer
 one word / for alle his felicitie was thenne
 turned

turned into aduerfyte / ¶ And therfore they that
ben in felycite / oughte not to dysprayfe them /
whiche ben in aduerfyte / For many one I
knewe ryche and myghty / whiche are now
poure

¶ The iiij fable maketh mencyon of the beestes
and of the birdes



One maye do no good to two lordes
at ones / whiche ben cōtrary one
to that other / as fayth to vs this
fable that the beestes made grete
werre ageynst the byrdes / & fought
euery day to gyder / And the backe feryng the
wulues And that the beestes shold vaynquyssh
and ouercome the byrdes / wold haue hold with
the beestes / and be ageynst the byrdes / And
whanne the batylle was ordeyned on bothe fydes /
the egle beganne to entre in to the batayll of
the beestes by suche a strengthe / that with the
help of the other byrdes he gat the feld /
and vaynquysshed / and ouercame the bestes /
wherfor the bestes maade pees with the byrdes /
and were alle of one accord and of one wylle /
And for the treason that the backe had made /
she was condempned to neuer see the day / And
neuer flee / but only by nyght / And also she was
despoylled of alle her fethers / And therfore he
that wylle serue two lordes cōtrary one to other
may-not be good ne trewe / And they wheche
relynquen

relynquen and leue theyr owne lordes for to
serue another ftraunger / whiche is enemy to
theyr lord / ben wel worthy to be punysshed /
For as the Euangele sayth / None may serue
bothe god and the deuyll x

¶ The v fable is of the nyghtyngale and of
the sperehawke



HE that oppresseth the Innocents
shal haue an euyl ende / wherof
Esopo reherceth to vs suche a
fable / Of a sperehawk / whiche
dyd put hym within the nest of
a nyghtyngale / where he fond the lytyl and
yonge byrdes / the nyghtyngale came and per-
ceyued hym / wherfore she praed the spere-
hawke / sayeng / I requyre and praye the as
moche as I may / that thou haue pyte on
my smal byrdes / And the sperehawk ansuerd
and sayd / yf thou wylt that I graunte the
thy request / thou must synge swetely after my
wylle and gree And thenne the nyghtyngale
beganne to synge swetely / not with the herte /
but with the throte onely / For he was so fulled
with sorowe that otherwyse he myght not doo /
The sperehawk sayd thenne to the nyghtyngale /
This songe playseth me not / And toke one of the
yonge byrdes and deuoured hit / And as the sayd
sperehawk would haue deuoured and eten the
other came there a hunter whiche dyd caste a
grete

grete nette vpon the sperehawk / And whanne she
wold haue fleen away / he myght not / for he
was taken / And therefore he that doth harme &
letteth the Innocents / is worthy to deye of euylle
dethe / As Caym dyd whiche flewe his broder
Abel

¶ The seuenth fable is of the foxe and of
the wulf



Fortune helpeth bothe the good and
euylle folke / and to alle them /
whiche she helpeth not she sendeth
euylle to them / And they that
setten alle theyr malyce ageynste
fortune ben subuertysed and ouerthrawn by
her / wherof Esope reherceth suche a fable / Of
a wulf whiche had assembled to gyder a grete
proye / or moche mete for to haue lyued more
delycioufly / wherof the foxe had grete anuye /
and for to haue robbed somme of this good / he
came vnto the cauerne or hole where as this
proye or mete was in / and sayd to the wulf /
My godsep the wulf / by cause hit is longe syth I
sawe the / I am in grete heuynesse and sorowe /
and also by cause we haue not been in longtyme
gone chaced and gone to gyder / ¶ And whan
the wulf knewe the malyce of the foxe / he sayd
to hym thow arte not come hyder for to see me /
ne how I fare / but thou arte come for to robbe
and rauyshe my good / For the whiche wordes
the foxe was moche angry / and wente toward a
sheepherd /

sheepherd / to whome he sayd / yf thou wilt be
auenged of the wulf whiche is enemy of thy heerd
or parke / on this day I shalle put hym under
thy handes / And the shepherd answered to the
fox in this manere / yf thou doo as thou sayst /
I shall paye the wel / And thenne the fox
shewed to hym the hool / wherein the wulf was /
And the shepherd Incontinent wente toward
the hole / and with a spere he kyld the wulf /
And by this manere the fox was wel fylled and
refresshyed of the good of the other / but as he
returned home ward / he was take and deuoured
by somme dogges / wherfore he sayd to hym self /
by cause that ryght euylle I haue done / euylle
cometh thou to me / For synne retorneth euer
vpon his mayster / And he that lyueth but of
raun and robberye shal at the last be knowen
and robbed /

¶ The ſeuenty fable is of the herte and of the
hunter



En preyſen ſomtyme that / that
ſhold be blamed & vitupered /
And ofte men blamen & vytu-
peren that / that ſhold be preyſed /
as reciteth to vs this fable of a
herte / To whome it happyd on a tyme that he
drank in a fonteyn or welle as he dranke / he
ſawe in the water his hede which was horned /
wherfore he preyſed moche his hornes / And
as he loked on his legges / whiche were
lene and ſmal / he deſpreyſed and vytupered
them / And as he was drynkynge in the fontayne
he herd the voys and barkynge of dogges /
wherfore he wold haue fledde away in to the
foreſt for to ſaue hym ſelf / but as he ſawe the
dogges ſo nyghe hym he wold haue entred within
a buſſhe / but he myght not / for his hornes
kepte hym withoute / And thenne ſeyng that
he myght not eſcape began to ſaye within hym
ſelf / I haue blamed and vytupered my legges /
whiche haue ben to me vtile and prouffitable /
and haue preyſed my hornes / whiche ben now
cauſe

cause of my dethe / And therfore men ought to
desprayse that thyng / whiche is vnprouffitable /
and preyse that whiche is vtile and prouffitable /
And they ought to preyse and loue the chirche and
the commaundements of the same / the whiche
ben moche vtile & prouffitable / And despreyse
and flee al synne and vyce / whiche ben inutyle
harmeful and dommageable

¶ The viij fable maketh mencion of Iuno / of
Venus / and of the other wygmmen



Efore the goddes and the goddeffes
men muste euer preyse chastyte /
for it is a worshipful & an honest
thyng to a woman to hold hyr
contente with a man alone / but
Venus for her desporte & for to dryue awaye the
tyme / wold Interpret the sayenge of the hennes /
wherfore she demaunded a henne whiche was
in her hows / but at this tyme I shal kepe my
tongue / and no ferther I shalle speke therof /
For many wyse men whiche haue sene and
redde alle this book vnderstanden wel alle the
nature of hit / and by cause it is lycyte & honest /
And that we alle ben bounden to kepe the ladyes
in theyre worship and honour / also that in euery
place where hit shalle be possyble to vs we ought
to preyse them / We shalle now cesse to enquire
ferther of this matere / and historye / whiche
we shall leue in latyn for the grete clerkes / & in
especial for them that wylle occupye theyr tyme
to judge and rede the glose of the sayd Esope

¶ The nygthe fable is of the knyght and of
the wydowe



He woman whiche lyueth in this
world without reproche or blame
is worthely to be gretely preyfed /
Wherof Esope reherceth suche a
fable of a man and of a woman /
whiche loued moche eche other / It happed thenne
by the effors of Atropos or dethe / the whiche
we al must suffer that the sayd man deyde /
And as men wold haue borne hym in to his
graue / (whiche was withoute the toun) there to
be buried / his wyf made grete sorowe and wepte
pyteously / And whanne he was buried / she wold
abyde styll vpon the graue / and lete do make a
lytyll lodge or hows therupon / and oute of this
lodge she wold neuer departe for no prayer ne
fayr word / neyther for any yestes ne for menaces
of her parents. Now it befell in the toun that a myf-
doer was condampned to be hanged / ¶ And to
thende that he shold not be taken fro the gallows /
hit was thenne commaunded that a knyght shold
kepe hym / And as the knyght kepte hym / grete
thurste took hym / And as he perceyued the lodge
of

of the fayd woman he wente to her / and prayd
her to gyue hym somme drynke / And she with
good herte gaf hym to drynke / And the knyght
dranke with grete appetyte / as he that had grete
thurste / & whan he had dronke / he torned ageyne⁵
to the galhows ward / This knight came another
tyme to the woman for to comforte her / And
thre tymes he dyd foo / And as he was thus goyng
and comynge / doubtyng hym of nobody / his
hanged man was taken and had fro the galhows /¹⁰
And whanne the knyght was come ageyne to
the galhows & sawe that he had losse his dede
man / he was gretely abasshed & not withoute
cause For hit was charged to hym vpon peyne
to be hanged / yf he were take away /¹⁵ This
knyght thenne seyng his Judgement / tourned
and went ageyne to the fayd woman / & cast
hym at her feete / and laye before her as he
had be dede / And she demaūded of hym /²⁰ My
frend / what wylt thou that I doo for the /²⁰ Allas
fayd he / I praye the that thou socoure and
counceylle me now at my grete nede / For by
cause I haue not kept wel my thief / whiche
men haue rauffyshed fro me / the kynge shalle
make me to be put to dethe /²⁵ And the woman
fayd / Haue no drede my friend / For well I shalle
fynde the manere wherby thou shalt be delyuerd /
For we shall take my husbond / and shalle
hange

hange hym in stede of thy thief/ ¶ Thenne
beganne she to delue / and tooke out of the erthe
her husbond / and at nyzt she hanged hym at
the galhows in stede of the other / and sayd to
the knyght / My ryght dere frend I pray the
that this be kept well secrete / For we doo hit
theefly / and thus the dede men haue somme /
whiche make sorowe for them / but that sorowe
is sone gone and passyd / And they whiche ben
on lyue haue some whiche drede them / but
theyr drede wantith and faylleth whan they ben
dede

C The tenth fable maketh mencyon of the yong
man / and of the comyn woman



Of the comyn and folyſhe wymmyn
Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a
fable / Of a woman whiche had
to name Tahys / the whiche was
cauſe by her feyned loue of the
dethe and loſſe of many yonge men / to one of the
whiche ſhe had be bete ofte before that tyme /
ſhe ſayd to hym in this wyſe / My ryght dere
loue and good frende / I ſuppoſe that of many
one I am wel byloued and deſpred / Neuertheles
I ſhall ſette my loue on thy ſelf alone / wherfore
I pray the that thou mayſt be myn / and I ſhalle
be thyn for alle thy goodes I retche not / but
only I deſyre thy ſwete body / And he that
knewe the feyntiſe and falſheed of the woman /
anſuered to her / ryght benyngly and ſwetely / thy
wyll and the myn ben both but one alone / For
thow arte ſhe whiche I mooft deſyre / and the
whiche I ſhalle loue all the terme of my lyf / Yf
thow deceyue me nomore / For by cauſe that
thow haſt decyued me in tyme paſſed / I am
euer aferd of the / but notwithſtondynge this /
thow

thow arte now moche playfaunt and fayr to the
fyghte of me / And thus the one begyled that
other / For the loue of a comyn woman is not to
be trusted / For thow oughtest to knowe and
thynk within thy self / that the comyn and
folyssh woman loue the not / but she loueth thy
fyluer x

¶ The xj fable is of the fader and of the
euglle sone



He good and wyse fader ought to
chastyse his children in theyr yong
age / and not in theyr old age /
For thenne hit is moche dyffycyle
to make them bowe As to us
reciteth this fable / Of a fader of famylle /
whiche had a sone / the whiche dyd no thyng
that he oughte to haue done / but euer was
goyng and playeng in the toun / And the
fader for the cryme and myfrewle of his sone
brawled euer and bete his meyny / And sayd to
them fuche a fable / Of a ploughman or la-
bourer / whiche bond a bole by the hornes to
an oxe The booll wold not be bound / and
smote strongly whith his feet after the man / and
launched his hornes at hym / ¶ And at the last
whan he was bound / the labourer sayd to them
I haue ioyned and bound you bothe to gyder /
to thende that ye doo somme labour / But I wyll
that the lest of yow two / that is to wete the
boole / be lerned and corryged of the mooste /
whiche is the oxe / For I must sayd the labourer
to

to hym self bynde them thus to gyder / to thende
that the bole / whiche is yong fyen and maly-
cious and strong / smyte ne hurte nobody /
wherof grete dommage myght come to me / But
by cause that I bote well / that the oxen shalle
teche and corryge hym wel / I haue put and
bound them bothe to gyder / ¶ Thus this fable
sheweth to vs / that the fader ought to teche and
gyue good ensample to his children and chaastyse
them whanne they be yong For he that well
loueth / wel he chaastyseth

¶ The xij fable is of the serpent



He Auctor that is to wete Esope
 reherceth to vs suche a fable of
 two euyls / sayeng that a serpent
 entryd som tyme within the forge
 of a smythe / for to ferche somme
 mete for her dyner / It happed / that she fond a
 fyle whiche she beganne to gnawe with her
 teethe / Thenne sayd the fyle to her / yf thou
 byte and gnawe me / yet shalt thou doo to me
 no hurte / but bytynge and gnawying on me /
 thou shalt hurte thyn owne self / For by my
 strengthe alle the yron is planed by me / And
 therefore thou arte a foole to gnawe me / For
 I telle the / that none euyll may hurte ne adom-
 mage another as euylle as he / Ne none wycked
 may hurte another wycked / ne also the hard
 ageynst the hard shalle not breke eche other /
 ne two enuyous men shal not both ryde vpon an
 asse / wherfor the myghty and stronge must loue
 hym whiche is as myghty and as strong as hym
 self is

¶ The xiiij fable is of the wolues and of
the sheep



Hanne men haue a good hede / and
a good defenfour / or a good Capi-
tayne / men oughte not to leue
hym / for he that leueth hym re-
penteth hym after ward of hit / as
to vs reherceth this fable / Of the sheep whiche
had werre and descencion with the wolues / And
by cause that the wolues made to stronge werre
ageynst the sheep / the shepe thenne tooke for
theyr help the dogges / and the whethers also /
And thenne was the bataylle of the sheep so grete
and so stronge / & fought so vygorously ageynst
the wolues that they put them to flyzt ¶ And
whanne the wolues sawe the strengthe of theyr
aduersaryes / they sent an ambassade toward the
sheep for to trete the pees with them / the whiche
Ambassade sayd to the sheep in this maner / yf
ye wylle gyue us the dogges / we shalle swere
vnto yow oure feythe / that we shalle neuer kepe
ne hold werre ageynst yow / And the sheep
ansuerd / yf ye wylle gyue vs your fayth / we
shalle be content / And thus they made pees to
gyder /

gyder / but the wulues kyld the dogges / whiche
were capytayns and protectours of the sheep /
And the dogges dyde but lytyll hurt to the wulues /
wherfore whanne the lytyl and yong wulues
were growen in theyr age / they came of eche⁵
part and countrey / and affembled them to gyder /
and all of one accord and wylle sayd to theyr
aunceftres and faders / we must ete vp alle the
sheep / And theyr faders anfuerd thus to them /
we haue made pees with them / ¹⁰Neuertheles the
yonge wolues brake the pees and ranne fyerfly
vpon the sheep / and theyr faders wente after
them / ¹⁵¶ And thus by cause that the sheep had
delyuerd the dogges to the wolues / the whiche
were theyr capytayns / and that they had none⁵
that kepte them / they were all eten and deuoured
of the wulues / ¹⁰Therefore hit is good to
kepe well his capytayne / whiche may at a nede
gyue focor and helpe / For a trewe frend is
oftyme better at a nede than a Royalme / ¹⁵For²⁰
yf the sheep had kepte the loue of the dogges /
the wolues had neuer deuoured them / wherfore
it is a fure thyng to kepe wel the loue of his
protectour and good frende / ²⁵

¶ xiiij fable is of the man and of the wood



e that gyueth ayde and help to his
 enemy is cause of his dethe / as
 recyteth this fable of a man
 whiche made an axe / And after
 that he had made his axe / he
 asked of the trees / and sayd / ye trees gyue yow
 to me a handle / and the trees were content /
 ¶ And whanne he had maade fast his handle to
 the axe / he began to cutte and throwe doune to
 the ground alle the trees / wherfore the oke and
 the ashe sayd / yf we be cutte / hit is wel ryght
 and reason / For to oure owne self we ben cut
 and thrawen doune / ¶ And thus hit is not
 good to put hym self in to the daunger and sub-
 iection of his enemye / ne to helpe hym for to
 be adōmaged / as thou maist see by this presente
 fable / For men ought not to gyue the staf by
 whiche they may be beten with

¶ The xv fable is of the wulf and of the dogge.



Liberte or freedome is a moche swete
 thyng / as Esope reherceth by
 this fable / of a wulf and of a
 dogge whiche by aduenture mette
 to gyder / wherfore the wulf de-
 maunded of the dogge / wherof arte thou so
 fatte and so playfaunt / And the dogge answered
 to hym / I haue wel kepte my lordes hows / &
 haue barked after the theues whiche came in the
 hows of my mayster / wherfore he and his meyny¹⁰
 gyue to me plente of good mete / wherof I am
 fatte and playfaunt / and the wulf sayd thenne
 to hym / It is wel sayd my broder / Certaynly
 syth thou arte so wel atte thyn ease and farest so
 wel I haue grete desyre to dwelle with the / to¹⁵
 thende that thou & I make but one dyner / wel
 sayd the dogge / come on with me yf thou wylt
 be as wel at thyn ease as I am / and haue thou
 no doubte of no thyng / The wulf wente with
 the dogge / and as they wente by the way / the²⁰
 wulf beheld the dogges neck / whiche was al
 bare of here / and demaunded of the dogge /
 My broder why is thy neck so shauen / And the
 dog

dog anfuered / it is by cause of my grete coler
of yron / to the whiche dayly I am fasted / And
at nyght I am vnbound for to kepe the hows the
better / Thenne sayd the wulf to the dogge /
This I wyshe ne nede not / For I that am in
lyberte / wylle not be put in no subiectiō / And
therefor for to fylle my bely / I wylle not be
subget / yf thou be acustommed for to be bound /
contynue thow in hit / and I shalle lyue as I
am wonte and acustomed / therfore there is no
rycheffe gretter / than lybete / for lyberte is
better than alle the gold of the world /

¶ The xvj fable maketh mencion of the handes /
of the feet / and of the mans bely



How shalle one do ony good to another / the whiche can doo no good to his owne self / as thow mayst see by this fable / Of the feet and of the handes / whiche somtyme had grede stryf with the bely / sayenge / Al that we can or may wyne with grete labour thow etest it all / and yet thou doost no good / wherfore thou shalt no more haue nothyng of vs / and we shalle lete the deye for hunger /¹⁰ And thenne when the bely was empty and fore hongry / she beganne to crye and sayd / Allas I deye for hunger / gyue me somewhat to ete / and the feet and handes sayd / thou getest no thyng of vs / and by cause that the bely myght haue no¹⁵ mete / the conduyts thorough whiche the metes passeth became smal and narowe / And within fewe dayes after the feete and handes for the feblenes whiche they felte wold thenne haue guen mete to the bely / but it was to late / for²⁰ the conduits were ioyned to gyder And therefore the lymmes myght doo no good to other / that
is

is to wete the bely / And he that gouerneth not
wel his bely withe grete payne he may hold the
other lymmes in theyr strengthe and vertue /
wherfore a seruaunt ought to serue wel his
mayster / to thende that his mayster hold and
kepe hym honestly / and to receyue and haue
good reward of hym / when his mayster shalle
see his feythfulnesse

¶ The xviij fable is of the Ape and of the foxe.



F the poure and of the Ryche Esope
reherceth suche a fable / Of an
ape / whiche prayd the foxe to
gyue hym somme of his grete
taylle for to couere his buttokes
therwith / sayenge thus to hym / what auaylleth
to the soo long a taylle / hit doth but wagge /
And that whiche letteth the / shalle be prouffit-
able and good for me / The foxe said to hym
I wold that hit were yet lenger / For rather I
wold see hit al to fowled and dagged / than hit
shold bere to yow suche honour / as to couere
thy fowle buttoks therwith / And therfore gyue
thou not that thyng of whiche thou hast nede
of / to the ende that afterward thou myster not
of hit

The xviij fable is of the marchaunt and
of the asse



any one ben trauaylled after theyr
dethe / wherfore men ought not
to desyre the dethe / As reherceth
Esope by this fable / Of a mar-
chaunt whiche ladde an asse laden
vnto the market / And for to be the sooner at
the market / he bete his asse / and sore prycked
hym / wherfore the poure asse wysshed & desyred
his owne deth / wenyng to hym that after his
dethe he shold be in reste / And after that he
had be wel bete and chaced he deyde / And
his mayster made hym to be flayne / and of his
skynne he dyd doo make tumbours whiche ben
euer bete / And thus for what payne that men
may haue durynge his lyf / he ought not to
desyre and wysshe his dethe / For many one
ben / whiche haue grete payne in this world
that shall haue a gretter in the other world /
For the man hath no reste for the dethe but for
his merytes

¶ The xix fable is of the herte and of the ore



Nely for to flee is assured to scape
 the daunger wherfore he fleeth /
 As thow shalt nowe see by this
 fable / Of a herte whiche rane
 byfore the dogges / and to thende
 that he shold not be take / he fledde in to the
 fyrst toun that he found / & entryd in to a stable
 where as many oxen were / to whom he sayd the
 cause why he was come there / prayeng them
 swetely that they wold saue hym / And the
 oxen sayd then to hym / Allas poure herte thow
 arte amonge vs euylle adressyd / thow sholdest
 be more surely in the feldes ¶ For yf thow be
 perceyued or sene of the oxeherd or els of the
 mayster / Certaynly thow arte but dede / Helas
 for god & for pyte I praye yow that ye wylle
 hyde me within your racke / and that ye deceyue
 me not / and at nyght next comynge / I shalle
 goo hens / and shalle putte my self in to a sure
 place / ¶ And whanne the seruants came for
 to gyue hey to the oxen / they dyd cast heye
 before the oxen / and wente ageyne theyre waye
 and sawe not the hert / wherof the herte was
 gretely reioysshed wenynge to haue scaped the
 perylle

peryllle of dethe / He thenne rendred thanke
 and grace to the oxen / and one of the oxen fayd
 to hym / It is facyle to scape out of the handes
 of the blynd but hit is not facyle to scape out of
 the handes of hym thet feeth wel / For yf oure
 mayfter come hyther whiche hath more than an
 honderd eyen / Certayn thow arte deed yf he
 perceyue the ¶ And yf he see the not / cer-
 taynly thow arte faued / and shalt goo forthe on
 thy waye surely /

The mayfter within a short whyle after entryd
 in to the stable / And after he commaunded to
 vyfyte and see the hey / whiche was before his
 oxen / And hym self went and tasted / yf they
 had ynough of hit / And as he tasted thus the
 heye / he felt the hornes of the herte with his
 hand / and to hym self he fayd / what is that
 that I fele here / and beyng dredeful called alle
 his seruautes / and demaunded of the manere
 how the herte was come thyder / And they fayd
 to hym / my lord I knowe nothyng therof /
 And the lord was full gladde and made the
 herte to be taken and flayne / and maade a grete
 feest for to haue ete hym / Therefore it happeth
 oftyme / that he whiche supposeth to flee is
 taken and hold within the lace or nette / For he
 that fleeth away is in grete peryllle / wherfore
 men ought wel to kepe them self to doo fuche
 dede / that they must nedes flee therefore

¶ The xx fable maketh mencion of the fallace of
the Lyon / And of his conuersacion



O conuerse with folke of euylle lyf
is a thyng moche peryllous / And
only to speke with them letteth
moch other / As this fable reher-
ceth of a lyon ryght strong and
ryght myghty / the whiche made hym self kynge
for to haue grete renommee and glorye / And fro
thenne forthon he beganne to chaunge his con-
dycions and customme shewing hym self curtois /
and swore that he shold hurte no bestes / but
shold kepe them ageynst euery one / And of this
promesse he repented hym by cause hit is moche
dyffycyle and hard to chaunge his owne kynd /
And therfore whanne he was angry / he lad
with hym somme smalle beestes in to a secrete
place for to ete and deceyue them / And de-
maunded of them / yf his mouthe stanke or not /
And alle they that sayd that it stanke or not
were al faued / And alle they the whiche an-
suered not he kylled / & deuoured them al / It
happed that he demaunded of the Ape / yf his
mouthe stanke or not / And thape sayd no but
that

that hit smelleth lyke bame / And thenne the
 lyon had shame to flee the ape / but he fond a
 grete falsheed for to put hym to dethe / He
 fayned to be seke and commaunded that al his
 leches & Cyrurgyens shold anone come vnto hym /
 whan they were come / he commaunded them
 to loke his vryne / And whan they had sene hit /
 they sayd to hym / Syre ye shalle soone be hole /
 But ye must ete lyght metes / And by cause
 that ye be kynge / alle is at your commaunde-
 ment / And the lyon anfuerd Allas Ryght fayne
 I wold ete of an Ape / Certaynly sayd the
 medecyn that same is good mete / Thenne was
 the Ape sente for And notwithstanding that
 he worshipfully spak and anfuerd to the kynge /
 the kynge made hym to dye / and deuoured
 hym ¶ Therefore hit is peryllous and harmeful
 to be in the felauship of a Tyraunt / For be hit
 euylle or good he wylle ete and deuoure euery
 thyng / And wel happy is he / that may ecape
 fro his bloody handes / And that may eschewe
 and flee the felauship of the eyll tyraunt

¶ Here synngsshed the thyrddde booke of the
 subtyle fables of Esope /

¶ The fyrst fable maketh mencyon of the foxe
and of the rayfyns



He is not wyfe / that desyreth to haue
a thyng whiche he may not
haue / As reciteth this fable Of
a foxe / whiche loked and beheld
the rayfyns that grewe vpon an
hyghe vyne / the whiche rayfyns he moche
desyred for to ete them ¶ And whanne he
sawe that none he myght gete / he torned his
forowe in to Ioye / and sayd these rayfyns ben
fowre /

fowre / and yf I had some I wold not ete them /
And therfore this fable sheweth that he is wyfe /
whiche fayneth not to defyre that thyng the
whiche he may not haue /

¶ The second fable is of the auncient wesel and
of the rat /



Wyte is better than force or strengthe /
As reherceth to vs this fable of
an old wesel / the whiche myghte
no more take no rats / wherfore
she was ofte fore hongry and be-
thought her that she shold hyde her self with-
ynne the flowre for to take the rats whiche came
there for to ete hit. And as the rats came to the
floure / she took and ete them eche one after
other / And as the oldest rat of all perceyued
& knewe her malyce / he sayd thus in hym
self / Certaynly I shalle kepe me wel fro the /
For I knowe alle thy malyce & falskede ¶ And
therfore he is wyse that scapeth the wytte and
malyce of eylle folke / by wytte and not by
force

¶ The thirde fable is of the wulf and of the
sheepherd and of the hunter



Any folke shewe themself good by
theyr wordes whiche are ful of
grete fantasyes / As reherceth to
vs thys fable of a wulf whiche
fledde byfore the hunter / and as
he fledde he mette with a sheepherd / to whome
he said my frende I praye the that thow telle
not to hym that folowith me whiche wey I am
gone / & the sheep herd said to hym haue no
drede ne fere nothyng / For I shalle not accuse
the / For I shalle shewe to hym another way /
And as the hunter came / he demaunded of the
sheepherd yf he had sene the wulf passe / And
the hunter both with the heed and of the eyen
shewed to the hunter the place where the wulf
was / & with the hand and the tongue shewed
alle the contrarye / And incontynent the hunter
vnderstood hym wel / But the wulf whiche per-
ceyued wel all the fayned maners of the sheep-
herd fled away / ¶ And within a lytyl whylle
after the sheepherd encountred and mette with
the wulf / to whome he sayd / paye me of that

I haue kepte the secrete / ¶ And thenne the
wulf anfuered to hym in this maner / I thanke
thyn handes and thy tongue / and not thyn hede
ne thyn eyen / For by them I shold haue ben
betrayed / yf I had not fledde aweye / ¶ And
therefore men must not truste in hym that hath
two faces and two tongues / for fuche folk is
lyke and semblable to the scorpion / the whiche
enoynteth with his tongue / and prycketh fore
with his taylle

¶ The fourth fable is of Iuno the goddessse and
of the pecok and of the nyghtyngale



Very one oughte to be content of
kynde / and of suche good as god
hath sente vnto hym / wherof he
must vse Iustly / As reherceth
this fable of a pecok whiche came
to Iuno the goddesse / and sayd to her / I am
heuy and sorowful / by cause I can not synge
as wel as the nyghtyngale For euery one
mocketh and scorneth me / by cause I can not
synge / And Iuno would comforte hym and
sayd / thy fayre forme and beaute is fayrer and
more worthy and of gretter preysynge than the
songe of the nyghtyngale / For thy fethers and
thy colour ben resplendysshing as the precious
Emerawd And theyr is no byrde lyke to thy
fethers ne to thy beaulte / ¶ And the pecok
sayd thenne to Iuno / All this is nought / fyth
I can not synge / And thenne Iuno sayd ageyne
thus to the pecok for to contente hym / This is
in the desposycion of the goddes / whiche haue
gyuen to eyther of yow one propyrte / and one
vertue / suche as it pleasyd them / As to the
they

they haue gyuen fayr fygure / to the egle haue
they gyuen strengthe / and to the nyghtyngale
fayr & playfaūt songe / And so to all other
byrdes / wherfore euery one must be content
of that that he hath For the myserable auary-
cious / the more goodes that they haue the more
they defyre to haue

¶ The 6 fable maketh mencion of the panthire
and of the vylayns



Very one ought to do wel to the
straunger and forgyue to the
myserable / As reherceth this
fable of a panthere whiche fylle in
to a pytte / And whan the vy-
laynes or chorles of the country sawe her /
somme of them beganne to smyte on her / and
the other sayd pardonne and forgyue her / for
she hath hurted no body / and other were that
gaf to her breed / And another sayd to the
vylayns / beware ye well that ye flee her not /
And by cause that they were al of dyuerse wyll /
euerychone of them wente and retorned home
ageyne wenyng that she shold deye within the
sayd pytte / but lytyl and lytyl she clymmed vp /
and wente to her hows ageyne / and made her
to be wel medicyned / in so moche / that soone
she was al hole / ¶ And within a whylle after
she hauynge in her memorye the grete Iniurye
that had be done to her came ageyne to the
place where she had be hurte and fore bete / &
began to kylle & flee al the bestes whiche were
there

there about and put al the sheepherds and fwyne-
herds & other whiche kepte beeftes all to flyght /
she brente the Corne & many other euyl and
grete harme she dyd then aboute / And whanne
the folke of the country sawe the grete dom-
mage that she dyd to them / they came toward
her / prayenge that she wold haue pyte on them /
And to them she anfuerd in this manere / I am
not come hyther to take vengeaunce on them
whiche haue had pyte and myferycorde of me /
but only on them that wold haue flayne me /
And for the wycked and euyele folk I recyte this
fable / to thende that they hurte no body / For
yf alle the vylaynes hadde hadde pyte / the one
as the other of the poure panthere or serpent
whiche was straunger and myferable / as moche
as she was fallen in to the pytte / the for sayd
euylle and dommyge had not come to them

¶ The vi fable is of the bochers and of the
whethers



Hanne a lygnage or kynred is indyfferent or indyuyfyon / not lyghtly they shalle doo any thyng to theyr salute / as reherceth to vs this fable / Of a bocher whiche entryd within a stable full of whethers / And after as the whethers sawe hym / none of them sayd one word / And the bocher toke the fyrst that he fonde / ¶ Thenne the whethers spake al to gyder and sayd / lete him doo what he wylle / And thus the bocher tooke him all one after another sauf one onely / And as he wold haue taken the last / the poure whether sayd to hym / Iustly I am worthy to be take / by cause I haue not holpen my felawes / For he that wylle not helpe ne comforte other / ought not to demaunde or aske helpe ne comforte / For vertue whiche is vnyed is better than vertue separate

¶ The seventh fable is of the fawkoner and of
the byrdes



He wyse ought to kepe and obserue
the good couceyll / And in no
wyse they ought not to doo the
contrarye / As reherceth to vs
this fable / Of the byrdes whiche
were Ioyeful and gladde / as the prymtemps
came / by cause that theyr nestes were thenne al
couerd with leues / And Incontynent they be-
held and sawe a fawkoner whiche dresyd and
leyd laces and nettes for to take them / ¶ And
thenne they sayd al to gyder / Yonder man hath
pyte of vs / For whanne he beholdeth ys he
wepeth / ¶ And thenne the pertryche / whiche
had experymented and assayed all the deceytes
of the sayd Fawkoner / sayd to them / kepe yow
alle wel fro that sayd man and flee hyghe in to
the ayer / For he seketh nothyng / but the
manere for to take yow / or to the markette he
shal be bere yow for to be sold / And they that
byleuyd his couceyll were saued / And they
that byleuyed it not were taken and lost / ¶ And
therefore they whiche byleue good councylle are
delyuerd oute of theyr peryles / And they whiche
byleue it not ben euer in grete daunger



IN tyme passed men preyfyd more
the folke full of lefynges and fals-
hede than the man full of trouthe/
the whiche thyng regneth gretely
vnto this daye / As we may see
by this present fable / Of the man of trouthe
and of the man lyar / whiche went to gyder
thorough the countrey / And so longe they wente
to gyder by theyr journeyes / that they came in
to the prouynce of the apes / And the kynge of
thapes made them bothe to be taken and brought
before hym And he beyng in his Royal mageste /
where as he satte lyke an Emperour / and alle
his Apes aboute hym / as the subgets ben aboute
theyr lord / wold haue demaunded / and in dede
he demaunded of the lyer / who am I / And the
lesynge maker and flaterer sayd to hym / thow
arte emperour and kynge / the fayrest creature
that is on earthe / ¶ And after the kynge de-
maunded of hym ageyne / who ben these whiche
ben al aboute me / And the lyar anfuerd / Syre
they ben thy knyghtes & your subgettes for to
kepe

kepe your persone / and your Royalme / And
thenne the kynge sayd thow arte a good man / I
wylle that thow be my grete styward of my
houfhold / and that euery one bere to the honour
and reuerence / And whan the man of trouthe
herd alle this he sayd to hym self / yf this man
for to haue made lesynges is soo gretely en-
haunced / thenne by gretter rayson / I shalle
be more worshipped and enhaunced / yf I saye
trouthe / ¶ And after the kynge wold aske the
trewe man / and demaunded of hym / who am
I / and alle that ben aboute me / And thenne
the man of trouthe ansuerd thus to hym / thow
arte an ape and a beste ryght abhomynable /
And alle they whiche ben aboute the are lyke
and semblable to the / ¶ The kynge thenne
commaunded that he shold be broken and toren
with teeth and clawes and put alle in to pycees /
And therefore it happeth ofte that the lyers and
flaterers ben enhauced / and the men of trouthe
ben fet alowe and put aback / For oftyme for
to saye trouthe men lese theyre lyues / the whiche
thyng is ageynst Iustyce and equitye

¶ The ix fable is of the hors / of the hunter and
of the hert /



One ought to put hym self in subiec-
tion for to auenge hym on other /
For better is not to submytte hym-
self / than after to be submytted /
As reherceth to vs this fable / Of
an hors whiche had enuye ouer an herte / by
cause the herte was fayrer than he / and the
hors by enuye went vnto an hunter / to whome
he sayd in this manere / yf thou wylt byleue
me / we shalle this day take a good proye /
Lepe vpon my bak / and take thy fwerd / and
we shalle chace the herte / and thou shalt hytte
hym with thy fwerd / and kille hym / and
shalt take hym / and thenne his flesshe thou
mayst ete / and his skynne thou mayst felle /

¶ And thenne the hunter moued by auaryce /
demaunded of the hors / thynkest thou by thy
feythe that we may take the herte / of whomme
thou spekest to me of / ¶ And the hors answerd
thus / Suffyse the / For ther to I shalle put al
my dylygence and alle my strengthe / lepe vpon
me / and doo after my counceylle / ¶ And
thenne

thenne the Hunter lepte forthwith vpon the
hors backe / And the hors beganne to renne
after the herte / And whanne the herte sawe /
hym come he fled / And by cause that the hert
ranne faster / than the hors did / he scaped fro
them / and saued hym / ¶ And thenne when the
hors sawe and felte hym moche wery / and that
he myght no more renne / he sayd to the hunter
in this manere / alyght fro my back / For I may
bere the no more and haue myft of my proye / 10
Thenne sayd the hunter to the hors Syth thou
arte entryd in to my handes / yet shalt not thou
escape thus fro me / thou hast the brydel in thy
mouthe wherby thou mayest be kepte styll and
arrested / And thou wylt lepe / the sadell shalle
saue me / And yf thou wylt caste thy feet fro
the / I haue good spores for to constrayne and
make the goo whether thou wylt or not where
as I wylle haue the / And therefore kepe the
wel / that thou shewest not thy self rebelle vnto
me / ¶ Therefore it is not good to put and
submytte hym self vnder the handes of other
wenynge therby to be auenged of hym / ageynste
whome men haue enuye / For who submytteth
hym self vnder the myght of other / he byndeth
hym self to hym 25

¶ The tenth fable is of the asse and of the lyon



He grete callers by theyr hyghe and
lowd crye supposen to make folke
aferd/ As recyteth this fable/ Of
an asse whiche somtyme mette
with a lyon/ to the whiche the
asse sayd / lette vs clymme vpon the montayne /
and I shalle shewe to the / how the beestes ben
aferd of me / and the lyon beganne to smyle /
and he anfuerd to the asse / Goo we my broder /
And whan they were on the top of the hylle /
the asse byganne to crye / And the foxe and
hares beganne to flee / And whanne thasse saw
them flee sayd to the lyon / Seest thou not how
these beestes dreden and doubtten me / and the
lyon sayde / I had ben also ferdfull of thy voys /
yf I had not knowen veryly that thou arte but
an asse / ¶ And therefore men nede not doute
ne drede hym that auanceth hym self for to do
that that he may not doo / For god kepe the
mone fro the wulues / Ne also men nede not
doubte a foole for his menaces / ne for his hyghe
crye

¶ The xj fable is of the hawke and of other
byrdes



He ypocrytes maken to god a berd
of strawe / As recyteth to vs this
fable / Of a hawke / whiche som-
tyme fayned / that he wold haue
celebrated and holden a natall or
a grete feste / the whiche feste shold be celebred
within a Temple / And to this feste and solemp-
nyte he Inuyted and somoned alle the smal
byrdes / to the whiche they came / And Inkon-
tynent as they were all come in to the temple /
the hawk shette the gate and put them alle to
dethe / one after an other / ¶ And therfore this
fable sheweth to vs / how we must kepe our self
fro all them / whiche vnder fayre semynge haue
a fals herte / and that ben ypocrites and decep-
tours of god and of the world /

¶ The xij fable is of the foxe / and of the lyon



Ayre doctryne taketh he in hym
 self / that chaſtyſeth hym by the
 perylle of other / As to vs re-
 herceth this preſent fable / Of a
 lyon whiche ſomtyme faygned
 hym ſelf ſeke / ¶ And whanne the beeſtes
 knewe that the lyon was ſeke / they wold goo
 alle to vyſyte and ſee hym as theyr kynge /
 ¶ And Incontynent as the beeſtes entryd in to
 his hows for to ſee and comforte hym / he deu-
 oured and ete them / ¶ And whan the foxes
 were come to the yate for to haue vyſyded the
 lyon / they knewe wel the fallace and falſhede
 of the lyon and ſalewed hym at the entre of the
 yate / And entryd not within / ¶ And whan
 the lyon ſawe that they wold not entre in to his
 hows / he demaūded of them / why they wold
 not come within / And one of the foxes ſayd to
 hym / we knowe wel by thy traces / that alle
 the beeſtes whiche haue entryd in to thy hows
 came not oute ageyne / And alſo yf we entryd
 within / nomore ſhold we come ageyne ¶ And
 therfor he is wel happy that taketh enſample
 by

by the dommage of other / ¶ For to entre
in to the hows of a grete lord / it is wel facyle /
but for to come oute of hit ageyne it is moche
dyffycyle /

¶ The xiiij fable is of the asse / and of the wulf



O none eyylle man feythe ne trouthe
ought neuer to be adiousted /
As men may wel see by this
fable / Of a wulf whiche vyfyt
an asse whiche was wel seke the
whiche wulf beganne to fele and taste hym / and
demaunded of hym / My broder and my frend
where aboute is thy fore / And the asse sayd to
hym / there as thow tasteft ¶ And thenne the
wulf faynyng to vyfyte hym / beganne to byte
and smyte hym / ¶ And therefore men must not
trust flaterers / For one thyng they saye / and
done another

The xiiij fable is of the hedgehogge and of the
lytyl kyddes



T behodeth not to the yong and
lytyl of age to mocke ne scorne
theyr older / As this fable sayth /
of thre lytyl hedgehogges / whiche
mocked a grete hedgehogge /
whiche fled before a wulf / And whanne he
perceyued the scornynge of them / he sayd to
them / Ha a poure fooles & wood ye wote not
wherfore I fle / For yf ye wyft and knewe wel
thyn conuenient and paryll / ye shold not mocke
of hit / And therefore whan men seen that the
grete and myghty ben ferdful and doubtful /
the lasse or lytyll oughen not to be assured / For
whan the toun is taken and gotten by fortune
of warre the Country aboute is not therfore
more acertayned / but ouzt to tremble and shake

¶ The xv fable is of the man and of the lyon /



En ought not to byleue the paynture /
 but the trouthe and the dede /
 As men may see by this present
 Fable / Of a man & of a lyon
 whiche had stryf to gyder & were
 in grete discension for to wete and knowe /
 whiche of them bothe was more stronger /
 ¶ The man sayd that he was stronger than the
 lyon / And for to haue his fayenge veryfyed /
 he shewed to the lyon a pyctour / where as a
 man had vyctory ouer a lyon / As the pyctour of
 Sampson the stronge ¶ Thenne sayd the lyon
 to the man / yf the lyon coude make pyctour
 good and trewe / hit had be herin paynted /
 how the lyon had had vyctorye of the man /
 but now I shalle shewe to the very and trewe
 wytnesse therof / The lyon thenne ledde the
 man to a grete pytte / And there they fought
 to gyder / But the lyon caste the man into the
 pytte / and submytted hym in to his subiection
 and sayd / Thow man / now knowest thow alle
 the trouthe / whiche of vs bothe is stronger /
 ¶ And therefore at the werke is knowen the best
 and most subtile werker /

¶ The xvj fable is of the camel / and of the flee



HE that hath no myght ought not to gloryfye ne preyse hym self of no-thinge / As reherceth to vs this presente fable of a camell / whiche bare a grete charge or burden. It happed that a flee by cause of the camels here lepte to the back of the camel / and made her to be borne of hym all the day. And whanne they had made a grete way / And that the camel came at euen to the lodgys / and was put in the stable / the flee lepte fro hym to the grounde besyde the foote of the camel / And after sayd to the camel / I haue pyte of the / and am comen doune fro thy back by cause that I wylle nomore greue ne trauaylle the by the berynge of me / And the camel sayd to the flee / I thanke thee / how be it that I am not fore laden of the / And therfore of hym which may neyther helpe ne lette men nede not make grete estymacion of

¶ The xviij fable is of the Ant and of the fygale



T is good to purueye hym self in the
 somer season of suche thynges /
 wherof he shalle myster and haue
 nede in wynter season / As thow
 mayst see by this present fable /
 Of the fygalle / whiche in the wynter tyme went
 and demaunded of the ant somme of her Corne
 for to ete / ¶ And thenne the ant sayd to the
 fygall / what hast thow done al the somer last
 passed / And the fygalle anfuerd / I haue songe /
 ¶ And after sayd the ante to her / Of my corne
 shalt not thou none haue / And yf thow hast
 songe alle the somer / danse now in wynter /
 ¶ And therfore there is one tyme for to doo some
 labour and werk / And one tyme for to haue
 rest / For he that werketh not ne doth no good /
 shal haue ofte ^{have} at his teeth grete cold and lacke
 at his nede /

¶ The xliij fable is of the pylgrym and of the
fwerd



n euylle man maye be cause of the
perdyction or losse of many folke /
As reherceth to vs this present
Fable / Of a pylgrym / whiche
fond in his way a fwerd ¶ And
asked of the fwerd / what is he that hath lost
the / ¶ And the fwerd answerd to the pylgrym /
A man alone hath lost me / but many one I
haue lost / And therfor an euyl man may wel
be lost / but er he be lost he may wel lette many
one / For by cause of an euylle man may come
in a Countrey many euyls

¶ The xix fable is of the sheep and of the Crowe



Men ought not to iniurye ne des-
praise the poure Innocentes ne
the symple folke. As reherceth
this fable / Of a Crowe / whiche
sette her self vpon the back of a
sheep / And whan the sheep had born her a
grete while she sayd to her / thou shalt kepe
thy self wel to sette vpon a dogge / ¶ And
thenne the crowe sayd to the sheep / Thynke
thow poure Innocent that I wote wel with
whome I playe / For I am old and malycious /
and my kynde is to lette all Innocents / and to
be frende vnto the euyls / ¶ And therfore this
fable wylle telle and saye / how ther be folke
of suche kynde / that they wyl doo no good
werk / but only to lette euer the Innocents and
symple folke

¶ The xx fable maketh mencion of the tree and
of the reed /



One ought to be proud ageynst his
lord / but oughte to humble hym
self toward hym / As this fable
reherceth to vs of a grete tre /
whiche wold neuer bowe hym
for none wynd / And a reed whiche was at his
foote bowed hym self as moche as the wynd
wold / And the tree sayd to hym / why dost
thow not abyde styll as I doo / And the reed
anfuerd / I haue not the myght whiche thou
hast / And the tree sayd to the reed proudly / than
haue I more strengthe / than thou / And anone
after came a grete wynde / whiche threwe doune
to the ground the sayd grete tree / and the reed
abode in his owne beyng / For the proude
shall be allway humbled And the meke and
hūble shalle be enhaunced / For the roote of
alle vertue is obedynce and humylyte

¶ Here fynnyssheth the fourthe booke of the sub-
tyle Fables of Esope / And how be it that
mor

mor of them ben not found in ony Reg-
ystre / Neuertheles many other fables com-
posed by hym / haue ben founden whiche
here after folowen

¶ The fyrste fable maketh mencion of the mulet /
of the foxe / and of the wulf



En Calle many folke Affes / that
ben wel subtyll / And fuche
wenen to knowe moche / and to
be a grete clerke that is but an
affe / As hit appiereth by thys
fable / Of a mule whiche ete graffe in a medowe
nyghe to a grete forest / to whome came a foxe
whiche demaunded of hym / What arte thou /
And the mule anfuerd I am a beest / And the
foxe sayd to hym / I ne demaunde ne aske of
the that / but I aske who was thy fader / ¶ And
the mule anfuerd / my grete fader was a hors /
And the foxe sayd ageyne I ne demaunde to the
that / but only that thou tellest me / who thou
arte named / And the mule sayd to the foxe /
I ne wote / by cause I was lytyll whanne my
fader deyde / Neuertheles to thende that my
name shold not be forgotten / my fader made hit
to be wretton vnder my lyfte foote behynde /
wherfore if thou wylt knowe my name / goo
thou and loke vnder my foote / ¶ And whanne
the foxe vnderstood the fallace or falskede / he
wente

wente ageyne into the forest / And met with
the wulf / to whome he sayd / Ha myschaunt
beest / what dost thou here / Come with me
and in to thy hand I shall put a good proye
Loke in to yonder medowe / there shalt thou
fynde a fatte beast Of the whiche thou mayst
be fylled / ¶ And thenne the wulf entryd in
to the medowe / and fonde there the mule /
Of whom he demaunded / who arte thou /
And the mule answered to the wulf / I am
a beast / And the wulf sayd to hym / This
is not that that I aske to the / but telle how
thou arte named / And the mule sayd I wote
not / but neuertheless yf thou wilt knowe my
name / thou shalt fynde it wreten at my lyfte
foote behynde / ¶ Thenne sayd the wulf / I praye
the / vouchesafe to shewe it to me / And the
mule lyft up his foote / ¶ And as the wulf
beheld and studyed in the foote of the mule / the
Mule gaf hym suche a stroke with his foote
before his forhede / that almost the brayne ranne
oute of his hede / ¶ And the foxe whiche was
within a bush and sawe alle the maner beganne
to lawhe and mocque the wulf / to whome
he sayd / Foole beeste thou wost wel / that
thou canst not rede / wherfore yf euylle is therof
come to the / thy self is cause of hit / For none
ought not to entremete hym to doo that / that
Impossyble is to hym /

¶ The second fable is of the bore and of the wulf



Vche desyren to be grete lordes /
and dyspreysen his parents / that
at the last becomen poure and
fallen in to grete dishonour / As
thow mayst see by this present
fable / Of a bore / whiche was amonge a grete
herd of other swynes / And for to haue lordship
and domynacion ouer alle them / he beganne to
make grete rumour / and shewed his grete teethe
for to make the other swynes aferd / but by
cause they knewe hym / they sette naught by
hym / wherof he displeased moche / and wold
goo in to a herd of sheep / and emonge lambes /
And whanne he was amonge the lambes / he
began to make grete rumour / and shewed his
sharp and long teeth ¶ And whanne the lambes
herd hym / they were sore aferd / and begganne
to shake for fere / ¶ And thenne sayd the bore
within hym self / here is the place wherin I
must abyde and duell For here I shalle be
gretely worshipped / For euerychone quaken
for fere of me / ¶ Thenne came the wulf there
for to haue and rauysse somme proye / And
the

the lambes beganne alle to flee / but the bore
as prowde wold not fere hym / ne go fro the
place / by cause he supposed to be lord / but the
wulf toke hym / and bare hym in to the wode
for to ete hym / ¶ And as the wulf bare hym /
it happed that he passed before the herd of
fwynes / whiche the bore had lefte / ¶ And
thenne whanne the bore perceyued and knewe
them / he prayd and cryed to them / that for the
loue of god they wold helpe hym / And that
withoute her help / he was deed / And thenne
the fwynes alle of one assent and owne wyll
wente and recouered theyr felewe / and after
slewe the wulf / And as the bore was delyuerd /
and sawe hym amonge the fwynes / and that alle
his doubte and fere was gone / he beganne to
haue vergoyne and shame / by cause that he was
thus departed / and gone fro theyr felawship and
sayd to them / My bretheren and my frendes / I
am well worthy to haue had this payne / by
cause / I was gone & departed from yow / And
therfore he that is wel / lete hym beware that
he moue not hym self / For suche by his pryde
desyreth to be a grete lord / whiche ofte falleth
in grete pouerte /

¶ The thyrd fable is of the foxe and of the cocke /



¶ Ftyme moche talkynge letteth / As
hit appiereth by this fable / Of a
foxe / whiche came toward a
Cocke / And sayd to hym / I
wold fayne wete / yf thou canst
as wel synge as thy fader dyde / And thenne
the Cock shette his eyen / and beganne to crye
and synge / ¶ And thenne the Foxe toke and
bare hym away / And the peple of the towne
cryed / the foxe bereth away the cok / ¶ And
thenne the Cocke sayd thus to the Foxe / My
lord vnderstandest thou not / what the peple
sayth / that thou bereft away theyr cock / telle
to them / that it is thyn / and not theirs / And
as the foxe sayd / hit is not yours / but it is
myn / the cok scaped fro the foxe mouthe / and
flough vpon a tree / And thenne the Cok sayd
to the foxe thou lyeest / For I am theirs and not
thyn / And thenne the foxe beganne to hytte
erthe bothe with his mouthe & heed sayenge /
mouthe / thou hast spoken to moche / thou
sholdest haue eten the Cok / had not be thyn
ouer

ouer many wordes / And therfor ouer moche
talkyng letteth / and to moche crowynge fmart-
eth / therefore kepe thy felf fro ouer many
wordes / to thende / that thow repentest the
not

¶ The fourthe fable is of the dragon and of the
herte



Men ought not to rendre euylle for
good / And them that helpen
ought not to be letted / As re-
herceth thys fable Of a dragon
whiche was within a Ryuer / and
as this Ryuer was dymynuyshed of water / the
dragon abode at the Ryuage / whiche was al
drye / And thus for lack of watre he coude
not stere hym / A labourer or vylayne came
thēne that waye / and demaunded of the dragon /
what dost thou there / And the dragon answered
to hym / I am here leste withoute water / with-
oute whiche I can not meue / but yf thou wilt
bynd me / and sette me vpon thyn asse / and
lede me in to my Ryuer / I shal gyue to the
habondaunce of gold and syluer / And the
vylayne or chorle for courtyse bound and ledde
hym in to his repayre / And whanne he had
vnbounden hym / he demaunded his fallary /
and payment / And the dragon sayd to hym /
By cause that thou hast bounden me / thou
wylt

wylt be payd And by cause that I am now
 hongry / I shalle ete the / and the vylayne
 anfuerd and fayd / For to haue done wel / thow
 wylt ete and deuoure me / And as they stryued
 to gyder / the foxe whiche was within the forest
 herd wel theyr question and different came to
 them / and fayd in this manere / Stryue ye no
 more to gyder / For I wyll acord / and make
 pees bytwixt you Late eche of yow telle to me
 his reason for to wete / whiche of yow hath¹⁰
 ryght / And whanne eche of them had told
 his caas the foxe fayd to the vylayne / Shewe
 thow to me / how thow boundest the dragon /
 to thende / that I may gyue therof a trewe and
 lawfull sentence / And the vylayne put the¹⁵
 dragon vpon his asse / and bound hym as he
 had done before / And the fox demaunded of
 the dragon / helde he thenne the so fast bounden /
 as he dothe now / And the dragon anfuerd / ye
 my lord / and yet more hard / And the foxe²⁰
 fayd to the vylayn / Bynde hym yet more
 harder / For who that wel byndeth / well can
 he vnbynd And whanne the dragon was fast
 and wel bounden / the fox fayd to the vylayne /
 bere hym ageyne there as thow fyrst tokest hym /²⁵
 And there thow shalt leue hym bounden as he
 is now / And thus he shalle not ete ne deuoure
 the / For he that dothe euylle / euylle he must
 haue /

haue / For Justly he shall ben punysshed of
god / they that done harme and dommage to
the poure folke For who so euer rendreth
euylle for good / he shalle therof iustly be re-
warded x

¶ The v fable is of the foxe and of the catte /



Here is many folke / whiche auaun-
 cen them and faye that they ben
 wyse and subtile / whiche ben
 grete fooles and knowynge no
 thyng / As this fable reherceth
 Of a foxe whiche som tyme mette with a
 Catte / to whome he sayd / My godsep / god
 geue yow good daye / And the catte answerd /
 my lord god gyue yow good lyf / And thenne
 the foxe demaunded of hym / My godsep what
 canst thou doo / And the catte sayd to hym /
 I can lepe a lytyl / And the fox sayd to hym /
 Certaynly thou art not worthy to lyue / by cause
 that thou canst nought doo / And by cause that
 the cat was angry of foxes wordes / he asked and
 demaunded of the foxe / And thou godsep what
 canst thou doo / A thousand wyles haue I sayd
 the foxe / For I haue a sak ful of scyences and
 wyles / And I am so grete a clerke / that none
 maye begyle ne deceyue me / And as they were
 thus spekyng to gyder the cat perceyued a knyght
 comynge toward them / whiche had many dogges
 with hym / and sayd to the foxe / My godsep /
 certaynly

certaynly I see a knygtt comynge hyther ward /
whiche ledeth with hym many dogges / the
whiche as ye wel knowe ben our enemyes / The
foxe thenne anfuerd to the cat / My godsep /
thou spekest lyke a coward / and as he that is
aferd / lete them come and care not thow / And
Incontynently as the dogges perceyued and sawe
the foxe and the catte / they beganne to renne
vpon them / And whanne the foxe sawe them
come / he sayd to the kat / Flee we my broder /
flee we / To whome the kat anfuerd / Certaynly
godsep / therof is none nede / neuer the les the
foxe bylued not the cat / but fledde / and ranne
as fast as he myght for to saue hym / And the
catte lepte vpon a tree and faued hym self /
fayenge / Now shalle we see / who shalle playe
best for to preferue and saue hym self / And
whanne the catte was vpon a tree / he loked
aboute hym / and sawe how the dogges held the
foxe with theyr teethe / to whome he cryed and
seyd / O godsep and subtyl foxe / of thy thow-
sand wyles that syth late thow coudest doo / lete
me now see / and shewe to me one of them /
the foxe anfuerd not / but was killed of the
dogges fend the catte was faued / ¶ And ther-
fore the wyse ought not to despraye the symple /
For suche supposeth to be moche wyse whiche
is a kynd and a very foole /

¶ The vij fable is of the hegoot and of the wulf



He feble ought not to arme hym
ageynst the stronge / As recyteth
this present fable of a wulf / whiche
some tyme ranne after a hegoot /
and the hegoot for to saue hym
lept vpon a rocke / and the wulf besyged hym /
¶ And after whan they had duelled there two
or thre dayes / the wulf beganne to wexe hongry /
and the hegoot to haue thurst / And thus the
wulf went for to ete / and the hegoot went for
to

to drynke / And as the hegoot dranke he sawe
his shadowe in the water / and speculynge and
beholdyng his shadowe profered and sayd suche
wordes within hym self / Thou hast so fayre
legges / so fayr a berd / and so fayre hornes / and
hast fere of the wulf / yf hit happed that he
come ageyne / I shalle corryge hym wel / and
shalle kepe hym wel / that he shalle haue no
myght ouer me / ¶ And the wulf whiche held
hys peas / and herkened what he sayd / toke hym
by the one legge thus sayenge / what wordes ben
these whiche thou profereft & sayst brorder He-
goote / ¶ And whanne the hegote sawe that
he was taken / he beganne to saye to the wulf /
Ha my lord / I saye no thyng / and haue pyte
of me / I knowe wel / that it is my coulpe / And
the wulf toke hym by the neck and strangled
hym / ¶ And therefore it is grete folye whan
the feble maketh werre ageynst the puyffant and
stronge.

¶ The biȝ fable is of the wulf and of the asse



En ought not to byleue lyghtly the
 councyll of hym to whome men
 purposen to lette / As ye maye
 see by this fable / Of a wulf
 whiche somtyme mette with an
 Asse / to the whiche he sayd / My broder I am
 hongry / wherfor I must nedes ete the / ¶ And
 thenne the Asse ansuerd ryght benyngly / My
 lord / with me thou mayst doo what someuer
 thou wylt / For yf thou etest me / thou shalt
 putte me oute of grete payne / But I preye the
 yf thou wylt ete me / that thou vouchesauf to
 ete me oute of the way / For wel thou knowest
 that I brynge home the rayfyns fro the vyne /
 and fro the feldes home the corne / ¶ Also wel
 thou knowest / that I bere home wood fro the
 forest / And whanne my maister wel do buyld
 somme edyffyce / I must go fetch the stons
 from the montayne / And at the other parte I
 bere the corne vnto the mylle / And after I bere
 home the floure / And for alle short conclusions
 I was borne in a cursyd houre / For to alle payne
 and to alle grete labours I am submytted & sub-
 get

get to hit / For the whiche I wylle not that
thow ete me here in the waye for the grete ver-
goyne and shame that therof myght come to
me / *x* But I pray the / and Instantly requyre the /
that thow wylt here my councyllle / whiche is / *5*
that we two go in to the forest / and thow shalt
bynde me by thy breste / as thy seruant / *x* And
I shalle bynd the by thy neck as my mayster
And thow shalt lede me before the in to the
wood where someuer thow wylt / to the ende *10*
that more secretly thow ete me / to the whiche
councyllle the wulf acorded and sayd / I wylle
wel that it be donne so / *x* ¶ And whanne they
were come in to the forest / they bounde eche
other in the maner as aboue is sayd / ¶ And *15*
whanne they were wel bounden / the wulf sayd
to the Asshe / goo we where thow wylt / and goo
before for to shewe the waye / *x* And the asse
wente before and ledde the wulf in to the ryght
waye of his maysters hows / ¶ And whanne the *20*
wulf beganne to knowe the way / he sayd to the
asse / we goo not the ryght way / to the whiche
the asse anfuerd / ¶ My lord saye not that /
For certaynly / this is the ryght wey / But for
alle that / the wulf wold haue gone backward / *25*
But neuertheless the asse ledde hym vnto the
hows of his mayster / ¶ And as his mayster and
alle his meyny sawe how the Asshe drewe the
wulf

wulf after hym / and wold haue entred in to the
hows they came oute with staues and clubbes
and smote on the wulf / ¶ And as one of them
wold haue caste and smyten a grete stroke vpon
the wulfes heede / he brake the cord / wherwith
he was bounden / And so scaped and ranne away
vpon the montayne fore hurted and beten / And
thenne the asse for the grete ioye he hadde of
that he was so scaped fro the wulf / beganne to
fynge / And the wulf whiche was vpon the
montayne / & herd the voys of thasse beganne to
faye in hym self / thow mayst wel cry and calle /
For I shalle kepe the wel another tyme / that
thow shalt not bynd me as thow hast done / but
late gone / ¶ And therefore hit is grete folye to
byleue the counceylle of hym / to whome men
will lette / And to putte hym self in his sub-
iection / And he that ones hath begyled / must
kepe hym fro another tyme that he be not de-
ceyued / For he to whome men purposen to
doo somme euylle tourn / syth men holden
hym at auauntage / men muste putte him self at
the vpper syde of hym / And after men shall
purueye for their counceylle

¶ The viij fable is of the serpent and of the
labourer /



HE Auctor of this booke reherceth
suche another Fable and of suche
sentence / as the precydent / that
is to wete / that men shold not
byleue hym / to whome / men
hath done eyylle / And sayth that somtyme in
heruest tyme a labourer wente for to see his
goodes in the felde / the whiche mette on his
way a serpent / And with a staf whiche he bare
in his hand smote the sayd serpent / and gaf hym
suche a stroke vpon the heed / that nyghe he
flewe hym / ¶ And as the serpent felte hym
self so fore hurted / he wente fro the man / and
entryd in to his hole / And sayd to the labourer /
O euylle Frende / thou hast bete me / But I
warne the / that thou neuer byleue not hym /
to the whiche thou hast done ony eyylle / Of
the whiche wordes the labourer made lytyl ex-
tyme and went forthe on his waye /

¶ It befelle thenne in the same yere / that
this labourer wente ageyne by that waye / for
to goo laboure and ere his ground / To whome
the

the fayd Serpent fayd / ¶ Ha my frend / whyther
 goost thow / And the labourer answerd to hym /
 I goo ere and plowe my ground / And the Ser-
 pent fayd to hym / fowe not to moche / For
 this yere shalle be raynfull and grete habond-
 aunce of waters shalle falle / But byleue not to
 hym / to whome thow hast somtyme done ony
 euylle / And withoute ony wordes the labourer
 wente forthe on his waye / and byleued not the
 serpent / but made alle his ground to be cultyued¹⁰
 and ered / and sowed as moche corne as he
 myghte / In that same yere felle grete habond-
 aunce of water / wherfore the fayd labourer had
 but lytyl of his corne / For the mooste parte of
 the corne that he had soweden perysshed that same¹⁵
 yere by cause of the grete rayne that felle that
 same yere / ¶ And the next yere after folow-
 ynge / as this labourer passyd before the repayre
 or dwellynge place of the fayd Serpent and
 went for to sowe his ground / the Serpent de-
 maunded thenne of hym / My Frend whyther
 goost thow / ¶ And the labourer answerd / I
 goo for to sowe my ground wyth corn and With
 other g[r]aynes fuche as I hope that shalle ben
 necessary for me in tyme comynge / And thēne
 the Serpent saide to hym / My frend fowe but
 lytyl corne / For the Somer next comynge shalle
 be soo grete and soo hote / that by the dryenes and
 hete /

hete / that alle the goodes sown on the erthe
shall perysshe. But byleue not hym / to whome
thow hast done ony euylle / ¶ And withoute
fayenge ony word / the labourer wente / and
thought on the wordes of the Serpent / ¶ And
wenynge / that the Serpent hadde soo sayd for
to deceyue hym / he sowed as moche corne and
other graynes / as he myght / ¶ And it happed
that the Somer next folowynge was fuche / as
aboue is sayd / Therfor the man was begyled /
¶ For he gadred that same yere nothyng /
¶ And the next yere after folowynge / the sayd
season as the poure labourer wente ageyne for
to ere and cultyue his ground the serpent sawe
hym come fro ferre / ¶ And as he came and
passed before his repayre he asked of the labourer
in fuche maner / ¶ My friend whyther goost
thow / And the labourer answered / I goo cultyue
and ere my ground / ¶ And thenne the serpent
seyd to hym / My Frend sowe not to moche ne
to lytyl of corne and of other graynes / but sowe
bytwene bothe / Neuertheles byleue not hym /
to the whiche thou hast done euyl ¶ And I
telle the that this yere shalle be the most tem-
perate and the moost fertile of alle maner of
corne / that euer thou sawest / And whanne the
labourer hadde herd these wordes / he wente
his waye / and dyd as the Serpent had sayd /
And

And that yere he gadred moche good / by cause of
the good disposicion of the season and tyme /
¶ And on a daye of the same yere / the serpent
sawe the sayd labourer comynge fro the heruest /
to whome he came ageynste / And sayd / Now
saye me my good Frend / Haft thou not fond
now grete plente of goodes / as I had told to
the byfore And the labourer answered and sayd
ye certaynly / wherof I thanke the / ¶ And
thenne the Serpent demaunded of hym Re-
muneracion or reward / ¶ And the labourer
thenne demaunded what he wold haue of hym /
And the Serpent sayd I ne demaunde of the
nothyng / but only that to morowe on the
mornyng thou wylt sende me a dyshe full of mylk¹⁵
by som of thy children / ¶ And thenne the
serpent shewed to the labourer the hole of his
dwellynge / & sayd to hym / telle thy sone
that he brynge the mylke hyther / but take
good heede to that that other whyle I told to²⁰
the / that thou byleuest not hym / to whome
thou hast done euylle / ¶ And anone after
whanne these thynges were sayd / the labourer
wente homeward / and in the morninge next
folowynge / he betoke to his sone a dyshe full
of mylke / whiche he brought to the serpent /
and sette the dyshe before the hool / And
anone the serpent came oute and slewe the
child

child through his venym / and when the labourer
cam fro the feld / and that he came before the
repayre or dwellinge of the serpent / he fond his
sonne whiche laye doune deed on the erthe /
Thenne beganne the sayd labourer to crye with
a hyghe voys / as he that was ful of sorowe and
of heuyneffe sayinge fuche wordes / Ha cursed
& euylle serpent / vermyn and fals traytour /
thow hast deceyued me / Ha wycked and de-
ceytfull beest / ful of all contagious euyll thow
hast sorowfully flayne my sone /

¶ And thenne the serpente sayd to hym / I
wylle well / that thow knowe / that I haue not
flayne hym sorowfully / ne withoute cause / but
for to auenge me of that / that thow hurtest me
on that other daye withoute cause / and hast not
amended hit / Haft thow now memorye / how
ofte I sayd to the / that thow sholdest not byleue
hym / to whome thow hast done eyyll / haue
now thenne in thy memorye / that I am auengyd
of the /

¶ And thus this fable sheweth how men ought
not to byleue ne bere feythe to them / to whome
men hath done somme harme or euylle.

¶ The ix fable is of the foxe / of the wulf / and
of the lyon /



Y hit be soo that ony hath ben
adommaged by other he ought
not to take vengeaūce by the
tong in gyuyng Iniuryous wordes /
and the cause why / is by cause /
that fuche vengeaunce is dishonest. As to us re-
herceth this present fable / Somtyme was a foxe /
that ete fysshe in a Ryuer / ¶ It happed / that
the wulf came that waye / ¶ And whanne he
sawe the foxe / whiche ete with so grete appe-
tyte / He beganne to saye / My broder gyue me
somme fysshe / And the foxe ansuerd to hym /
Allas my lord / It behoueveth not that ye ete the
releef of my table / but for the worship of your
persone I shall counceylle yow wel / Doo soo
moche to gete yow a basket / And I shalle teche
yow how men shalle take fysshes / to thende /
that ye may take somme whan ye shalle be
hongry / And the wulf wente in to the streete /
and stalle a basket / whiche he brought with
hym / the foxe tooke the basket / and bound
it with a cord at the wulfs taylle / ¶ And
whanne

whanne he was wel bounden / the foxe sayd
to the wulf / goo thow by the Ryuer / and I
shal lede and take hede to the basket / And
the wulf dyde as the foxe had hym do / ¶ And
as the wulf was goynge within the water / the
foxe fylled the basket fulle of stones by his
malyce / ¶ And whan the basket was full /
the foxe sayd to the wulf / Certaynly my lord /
I maye no more lyfte ne hold the basket / so full
it is of fysshe / ¶ And the wulf wenyng that
the foxe had sayd truthe / profered such wordes /
fayenge / I render graces and thankes to god /
that I maye ones see thyn hyghe and excellent
wyfedom in the arte and crafte of fysshynge /
¶ And thenne the foxe sayd to hym / My lord
abyde me here / And I shalle fetch some to
helpe vs for to haue and take the fysshe oute
of the basket / And in fayenge these wordes /
the foxe ranne in to the strete / where he fond
men / to whome he sayd in this manere / My
lordes what doo ye here / why are yow werk-
less / see yonder the wulf / which ete your sheep /
your lambes / and your beestes / and yet now he
taketh your fysshes oute of the Ryuer / and
ete them / ¶ And thenne alle the men came to
gyder / somme with flynges / and somme with
bowes / and other with staues vnto the Ryuer /
where they fond the wulf / whiche they bete
outragyously

outragyouffly / ¶ And whanne the poure wulf
fawe hym thus oppressed / & vexed with strokes
beganne with alle his strengthe & myghte to
drawe / and supposed to haue caryed the fyfthe
away / but so strongly he drewe / that he drewe
and pulled his taylle fro his ers / and thus he
scaped vnnethe with his lyf / ¶ In the mene-
whyle thenne happed / that the lyon whiche was
kyngge ouer alle beestes felle in a grete sekenesse /
for the whiche cause euery beest wente for to see
hym / as theyr lord / ¶ And when the wulf
would haue gone thyder / he falewed his lord /
saying thus to hym / My kyngge I falewe yow /
please it you to knowe that I haue gone round
aboute the countre and prouynce / and in alle
places of hit for to serche somme medycynes
prouffitable for yow / and to recowere your
helthe / but nothyng I haue found good for
your sekenesse / but only the skynne of a foxe
fyers and prowde and malycious / whiche is
youre body medycynal / but he dayneth not to
come hyther to see you But ye shalle calle
hym to a counceylle / and whanne ye hold
hym / lete his skynne be taken from hym /
And thenne lete hym renne where he wylle /
and that fayr skynne which is so holsome / ye
shalle make hit to be sette and bound vpon
your bely / And within fewe dayes after hit
shalle

fhalle rendre yow in as good helthe / as euer ye
 were / ¶ And whanne he had fayd these wordes /
 he departed fro the lyon and toke his leue / but
 neuer he had supposyd / that the foxe had
 herd hym / but he had / For he was within
 a terryer nyghe to the lodgys of the lyon /
 where he herd alle the propofycion of the
 wulf / to the whiche he dyd put remedye and
 grete prouyfyon / For as foone as the wulf was
 departed fro the lyon / the foxe wente in to the
 felde / And in a hyghe way he fond a grete
 donghyll / within the whiche he put hym felf /
 ¶ And as he supposyd after his aduys to be de-
 fowled and dagged ynough / came thus arayed
 in to the pytte of the lyon / the whiche he
 falewed as he oughte to haue done to his lord /
 fayenge to hym in this manere / Syre kynge god
 yeue good helthe / And the lyon anfuerd to hym
 God falewe the fwete frend / come nyghe me
 and kyffe me / & after I fhalle telle to the fomme
 fecrete / whiche I wylle not that euery man
 knowe / to whome the foxe fayd in this maner
 Ha a fyre kynge be not displeafyd / for I am to
 fowle arayed and al to dagged / by cause of the
 grete way / whiche I haue gone / fekyng al
 aboute fomme good medycyne for you / wher-
 fore it behoueth not me / for to be fo nyghe your
 perfone For the ftenche of the donge myght
 wel

wel greue you for the grete fekenefſe that ye haue / but dere fyre / yf hit pleaſe to the or euer I come nerer to your Royal mageſte I ſhalle goo bathe me and make me fayre and clene / And thenne I ſhall come ageyne to preſente my ſelf byfore thy noble perſone / And notwithſtondynge al this / alſo er I goo / pleaſe the to wete & knowe that I come from alle the contrees here aboute / and from alle the Royalmes adiacent to this prouynce / for to ſee yf I coudefynde ſomme good medycyn duſynge and nedeful to thy ſikenefſe / and for to fecouere thy helthe / but certaynly I haue found no better counceyller than the counceyller of an auncient greke with a grete & long berd / a man of grete wyſdom / ſage & worthy to be prayſed / the whiche ſayd to me / how in this prouynce is a wulf withoute taylle / the whiche hath loſt his taylle by the vertue of the grete medycyn whiche is within hym / For the whiche thyng it is nedeful and expedyent / that ye doo make this wulf to come to yow for the recoueraunce of the helthe of your fayr and noble body / And whan he is come dyſſymle and calle hym to counceyller / ſayenge that it ſhalle be for his grete worſhip & proffite / & as he ſhal be nyghe vnto yow caſt on hym your armed feet / and as ſwetely as ye maye pulle the ſkynne fro the body of hym & kepe it hoole /
ſauf

fauf only that ye fhalle leue the heed and the feet / And thenne lete hym gone his way to feche his auenture / And forthwith whan ye fhalle haue that fkyne / al hot and warme ye fhall do bynd hit al aboute your bely / And after that or lytyll tyme be paffed / your helthe fhalle be reftored to yow / and ye fhall be as hole as euer in your lyf ye were / ¶ And thenne the foxe toke his leue of the kynge / and departed / and wente ageyne in to his terryer / ¶ Soone after came then the wulf for to fee the lyon / And Incontynent the lyon called hym to counceylle / and caftynge foftly his feet vpon hym dyspoylled the wulf of his fkyne fauf the fkyne of his hede and of his feet / And after the lyon bound it al warme about his bely / ¶ And the wulf ranne awaye fkyndles / wherfore he had ynough to doo to defende and put from hym the flyes / whiche greued hym fore / And for the grete deftreffe that he felte by caufe of the flyes / that thus ete his flefhe / he as wood beganne to renne / and paffyd vnder an hylle / vpon the whiche the foxe was / ¶ And after whanne the foxe fawe hym / he beganne to crye / and calle / lawhyng after the wulf / and mocked / and fayd to hym / who arte thou that paffeft there before with fuche a fayre hood on thy heed and with ryght fayr glouues in thyn handes / Herke herke / what I fhalle

fhalle faye to the / whan thow wente & cameft
by the kynges hows / thow werte bleffed of the
lord / & whan thou were at the Court thow her-
keneft and alfo fayeft many good wordes and
good talkynge of al the world /

¶ And therfore my godfep be it euyl or good /
thow muſte al lete paſſe / and goo / and haue
pacyence in thyn aduerſyte /

¶ And thus this fable ſheweth vnto vs / that yf
ony be hurted or dommaged / by ſomme other
he muſt not auenge hym ſelf by his tonge for
to make ony treſon / ne for to fay of other ony
harne ne open blaſphemye / For he ought to
conſydere / that who ſo euer maketh the pytte
redy for his broder / ofte it happeth that he hym
ſelf falleth in the ſame / and is beten with the
ſame rodde that he maketh for other

¶ The x fable is of the wulf whiche made a fart



T is folye to wene more / than men
ought to doo / For what someuer a
foole thynketh · hit semeth to hym
that hit shalle be / As it appiereth
by this fable / of a wulf / whiche
somtyme rose erly in a mornynge / And after
that he was ryfen vp fro his bedde / as he retched
hym self / made a grete fart / and beganne to saye
to hym self / blessed be god therfore / these ben
good tydynges / this daye / I shalle be wel for-
tunate and happy / as myn ers syngeth to me /
And thenne he departed from his lodgys / and
biganne to walke and goo / & as he wente on his
way he fonde a sak ful of talowe / whiche a
woman had lete falle / and with his foote he
torned hit vpso doune / and sayd to hym / I shalle
not ete the / For thow sholdest hurte my tendre
stomak / and more is / I shall this day haue better
mete / and more delycious / For well I knowe
this by myn ers / whiche dyd synge it to me /
And sayenge these wordes went his way / And
anone

anone after he fond a grete pyece of bakon wel
falted / the whiche he tourned and retourned vp
fodoune / And whan he had torned and retorned
hit longe / ynough / he fayd / I dayne not to ete
of this mete / by cause that hit shold cause me
for to drynke moche / for it is to falte ² And as
myn ers songe to me last I shalle ete this same
day better and more delycious mete / ¶ And
thenne he beganne to walke ferther / And as he
entryd in to a fayr medowe / he sawe a mare /
and her yong foole with her / and fayd to hym
self alone / I rendre thankes and graces to the
goddes of the godes that they send me / For wel
I wyft and was certayne / that this daye I shold
fynde somme precious mete / And thenne he
came nyghe the mare and fayd to her / Certaynly
my suster I shalle ete thy child / And the mare
anfuerd to hym / My broder doo what someuer
hit shalle please the / But fyrst I praye the that
one playfyre thou wylt do to me / I haue herd
saye that thou art a good Cyrurgyen / wherfore
I praye the / that thou wylt hele me of my foote /
I saye to the my good broder / that yester daye
as I wente within the forest / a thorne entryd in
to one of my feet behynd / the whiche greueth
me fore / I praye the / that or thou ete my
fool / thou wylt drawe and haue it oute of my
foote / And the wulf answerd to the mare that
shalle I doo gladly my good suster / shewe me
thy

thy foote / ¶ And as the mare shewed his foote
to the wulf / she gaf to the wulf suche a stroke
bytwexe bothe his eyen / that alle his hede was
astonyed and felle doune to the ground / and a
longe space was the wulf lyenge vpon the erthe /
as deed / And whanne he was come to hym self
ageyne / and that he coud speke / he sayd / I care
not for this myshap / For wel I wote that yet
this day I shalle ete / and be fylled of delycious
mete / And in sayenge these wordes lyft hym
self vp / and wente aweye / ¶ And whanne he
had walked and gone a whyle / he fond two
rammes within a medowe whiche with theyr
hornes laūched eche other / And the wulf sayd
to hymself / Blessed be god / that now I shal
be wel fedde / he thenne came nyghe the two
rammes / & said / Certaynly I shall ete the one
of you two And one of them sayd to hym /
My lord doo alle that it plese yow / but fyrst ye
must gyue vs the sentence of a proceffe of a
plee whiche is bytwixe vs bothe / And the wulf
ansuerd / that with ryght a good wylle he wold
doo hit / And after sayd to them / My lordes
telle my your resons and caas / to thende that the
better I may gyue the sentence of your dyferent
and question / And thenne one of them beganne
to say / My lord / this medowe was bylongynge
to our fader / And by cause that he deyde with-
oute

oute makynge ony ordenaunce or testament / we
 be now in debate and stryf for the partyng of
 hit / wherfore we praye the that thou vouchef
 fauf to accorde oure dyferent / so that pees
 be made bytwene vs / And thenne the wulf⁵
 demaunded of the rammes how theyr question
 myght be accorded / Ryght wel sayd one of
 them / by one manere / whiche I shal telle to
 the / yf hit please to the to here me / we two
 shalle be at the two endes of the medowe / and¹⁰
 thou shalt be in the myddes of it / And fro
 thende of the medowe / we bothe at ones shalle
 renne toward the / And he that fyrst shalle come
 to the / shalle be lord of the medowe / And the
 last shalle be thyn / Wel thene sayd the wulf /¹⁵
 thyn aduys is good and wel purposed / late see
 now who fyrst shalle come to me / Thenne wente
 the two rammes to renne toward the wulf / And
 with alle theyr myght came and gaf to hym
 suche two strokes bothe at ones ageynst bothe²⁰
 his sydes / that almost they brake his herte within
 his bely / & then fyll doune the poure wulf alle
 afwowned / And the rammes wente theyr way /
 ¶ And whanne he was come ageyn to hym self /
 he took courage and departed / sayenge to hym²⁵
 self / I care not for alle this Iniurye and shame /
 For as myn ers dyde synge to me / yet shalle I
 this day ete somme good and delycious mete /
 ¶ He

¶ He had not long walked / whanne he fond a
 fowe / and her smal pygges with her / And In-
 continent as he sawe her / he sayd / blessed be
 god of that I shalle this daye ete and fylle my
 bely with precious metes / and shalle haue good
 fortune / And in that sayenge approched to the
 fowe / & sayd to her / My suster I must ete
 somme of thy yonge pygges And the fowe wente
 and sayd to hym / my lord I am content of alle
 that / whiche pleaseth to yow / But or ye ete
 them / I praye yow that they maye be baptyfed
 and made clene in pure and fayre water / And
 the wulf sayd to the fowe / Shewe me thenne
 the water / And I shalle wasshe and baptyse
 them wel / And thenne the fowe wente and
 ledde hym at a stange or pond where as was a
 fayr mylle ¶ And as the wulf was vpon the
 lytyl brydge of the sayd mylle / and that he wold
 haue take one pygge / the fowe threwe the wulf
 in to the water with her hede / and for the swyft-
 nesse of the water / he must nedes passe vnder
 the whele of the mylle / And god wote yf the
 wynges of the mylle bete hym wel or not / And
 as soone as he myght / he ranne away / And as
 he ranne seyde to hym self / I care not for soo
 lytyl a shame / ne therefore I shall not be bette /
 but that I shalle yet this daye ete my bely full
 of metes delycious / as myn ers dyd synge it erly
 to

to me / ¶ And as he passed thurgh the strete /
 he sawe somme sheep / and as the shepe sawe
 hym / they entryd in to a stable / ¶ And whan
 the wulf came there he sayd to them in this
 manere / God kepe you my susters / I must ete
 one of yow / to thende / that I may be fylled
 and rassafyed of my grete hunger / And thenne
 one of them sayd to hym / Certaynly my lord /
 ye are welcome to passe / For we ben comen
 hyder for to hold a grete solempnyte / wherfore
 we alle praye yow / that ye pontyfycally wylle
 synge / And after the seruyse complete and done /
 doo what ye wyll of the one of vs / & thenne the
 wulf for vayn glory / faynyng to be a prelate be-
 ganne to synge and to howle before the sheep /
 ¶ And whanne the men of the toune herd the
 voys of the wulf / they came to the stable with
 grete staues and with grete dogges / and wonderly
 they wounded the wulf / and almost brought
 hym to deth / that with grete payne he coude
 goo / neuertheles he scaped / and wente vnder
 a grete tree / vpon the whiche tree was a man
 whiche hewe of the bowes of the tree / The
 wulf thenne beganne to fyghe fore / and to make
 grete forowe of his euylle fortune / and sayd / Ha
 Jupiter how many euyls haue I had and suffred
 this daye / but wel I presume and knowe / that
 hit is by me and by myn owne cause / and by
 my

my proud thoughte / For the daye in the morn-
 ynge I fond a fack ful of talowe / the whiche I
 dayned not but only smelle hit. And after I
 fond a grete pycece of bakon / the whiche I wold
 neuer ete for drede of grete thurst and for
 my folyfhe thought / And therefore yf euylle is
 fyn happed to me it is wel bestowed and em-
 ployed / My fader was neuer medecyn ne leche /
 and also I haue not studyed and lerned in the
 fcyence of medycyn or phifyke / therefore if it
 happeth euylle to me / whanne I wold drawe
 the thorne oute of the mares fote it is wel em-
 ployed / ¶ Item my fader was neuer neyther
 patryarke ne Biffhop / and also I was neuer
 lettred / and yet I presumed / and toke on me¹⁵
 for to facryfyce and to fynge before the goddes /
 faynyng my felf to be a prelate / but after my
 deferte I was wel rewarded / ¶ Item my fader
 was no legift ne neuer knewe the lawes / ne also
 man of Juftyce / and to gyue fentence of a pleee /²⁰
 I wold entremete me / and fayned my felf grete
 Juftyce / but I knewe neyther / a / ne / b /
 ¶ And yf therefore euylle is come to me / it
 is of me as of ryght it fhold be / O Jupyter I
 am worthy of gretter punycyon whanne I haue²⁵
 offended in fo many maners / fende thow now to
 me from thyn hyghe throne a fwerd or other
 vepn /

vepen / wherwith I maye strongly punyſſhe and
bete me by grete penaunce / For wel worthy I
am to receyue a gretter deſcipline / And the
good man whiche was vpon the tree / herkened
alle theſe wordes and deuyses / and ſayd no
word / ¶ And whanne the wulf had fyniſhed
alle his ſyghes and complayntes / the good man
toke his axe / wherwith he had kytte away the
dede braunches fro the tre / and caſt it vpon the
wulf / and it felle vpon his neck in ſuche maner
that the wulf turned vpsodoun the feet vpward
and laye as had ben dede / And whan the wulf
myght releue and dreſſe hym ſelf / he loked and
byheld vpward to the heuen / and beganne thus
to crye / Ha Jupiter I ſee now wel that thou
haſt herd and enhaunced my prayer / and thenne
he perceyued the man whiche was vpon the tree /
& wel wende that he had ben Jupiter / And
thenne with alle his myght he fledde towards
the foreſt fore wounded / and rendred hym ſelf
to humylyte / and more meke and humble he
was afterwards than euer before he had ben
fyers ne prowde / ¶ And by this fable men
may knowe and ſee that moche reſteth to be
done of that / that a foole thynketh / And hit
ſheweth to vs / that whan ſomme good cometh
to ſomme / it ought not to be reffuſed / For it
maye

maye not ben recouerd as men wyll / And also
it sheweth / hou none ought to auaunte hym to
doo a thyng whiche he can not doo / but ther-
fore euery man ought to gouerne and rewle
hym self after his estate and faculte /

¶ The xj fable is of the enuyous dogge /



one ought not to haue enuye of
 good of other / As it appiereth
 by this fable / Of a dogge whiche
 was enuyous / and that somtyme
 was within a stable of oxen / the
 whiche was ful of heye / This dogge kept the
 oxen that they shold not entre in to theyr stable /
 and that they shold not ete of the sayd heye / And
 thenne the oxen sayd to hym / thow arte wel
 peruers and euylle to haue enuye of the good /
 the whiche is to vs nedefull and prouffitable /
 and thow hast of hit nought to doo / for thy
 kynde is not to ete no heye / And thus he dyd of
 a grete bone / the whiche he held at his mouthe /
 and wold not leue hit by cause and for enuye of
 another dogge / whiche was therby / And ther-
 fore kepe the wel fro the company or felauship
 of an enuyous body / For to haue to doo with
 hym hit is moche peryllous and dyffycyle / As
 to vs is wel shewen by Lucyfer

¶ The xij fable is of the wulf and of the
honger dogge /



Uche supposen somtyme wyne that
lesse / As hit appiereth by this
Fable / For hit is sayd comunly
that as moche despendeth the
nygard as the large / As hit ap-
piereth by this fable of a man whiche had a grete
herd of sheep / And also he had a dogge for to
kepe them fro the wulues / To this dogge he gaf
no mete / for the grete auaryce whiche held hym /
And therefore the wulf on a daye came to the
dogge and demaunded of hym the rayson / why
he was soo lene / and sayd to hym / I see wel
that thou dyest for hunger / by cause that thy
mayster gyueth the no mete / by his grete scar-
cyte / but yf thou wylt byleue me I shalle gyue
to the good counceyll / And the dogge sayd to
hym / Certaynly I myster gretely of good coun-
ceyll / ¶ Thenne the wulf sayd to hym / This
shalt thou doo / Lete me take a lambe / And
whanne I shalle haue hit I shalle renne away /
and whanne thou shalt see me renne / make
thenne

thenne semblant to renne after me / and lete thy
 self falle faynyng that thou canst not ouertake
 me / for lack and fawte of mete / whiche maketh
 the so feble / And thus whanne the sheepherd
 shalle see that thou mayst not haue the lambe from
 me by cause of the grete febleness and debylyte
 of thy lene body / he shell telle to thy lord that
 thou myghtest not socoure the lambe / by cause
 that thou arte so fore ahongryd / and by this
 means thou shalt haue mete thy bely ful / ¶ The¹⁰
 dogge thenne acorded this with the wulf / and
 eche of them made and dyde as aboue is sayd /
 ¶ And whane the sheep herd sawe the dogge
 falle / ^(he)suposed wel / that hunger was a cause of
 it Forthe whiche cause whanne one of the¹⁵
 sheep herdes came home he told hit to his mayf-
 ter / And whan the mayster vnderstood hit / he
 sayd as a man wroth for shame / I wylle that
 fro hens forthon he haue breed ynough / ¶ And
 thenne euery daye the sayd dogge hadde soppes²⁰
 of brede / and of drye breed he hadde ynough /
 ¶ Thenne the dogge toke strengthe / and vygour
 ageyne / ¶ It happed within a lytyl whyle after /
 that the wulf came ageyne to the dogge / and sayd
 to hym / I perceyue wel / that I gaf to the good²⁵
 councyll / And the dogge sayd to the wulf /
 My broder thou sayst soothe / wherfore I thanke
 the moche / For of hit I hadde grete nede /
 ¶ And

¶ And thenne the wulf sayd to hym / yf thou
wylt I shall gyue to the yet better counceyll /
And the dogge answerd hym with ryght a good
wylle I shall here hit / And yf hit be good I
shall do after hit / ¶ Thenne sayd the wulf to
hym Lete me take yet another lambe / and doo
thy dylygence for to haue hit fro me / and to
byte me / and I shall ouerthrowe the thy feet
vpward / as he that hath no puyssaunce ne
strength withoute hurtyng of thy self / byleue
me hardyly / and wel hit shall happe to the /
And whanne thy maysters seruaunts shall haue
sene thy dylygence / they shal shewen hit to thy
mayster how that thou shal kepe ful wel his
folde / yf thou be wel nourysshed / ¶ And
thenne the dogge answerd to the wulf that he
was contente / And as hit was sayd / ryght so
hit was done / and bothe of them maad good
dylygence / The wulf bere awaye the lambe /
and the dogge renne after hym / and ouertook
hym / & bote hym fayntly / And the wulf ouer-
threwe the dogge vpfodoune to the ground /
And whan the shepherdes sawe gyue suche
strokes amonge the dogge & the Wulf / sayd
Certaynly we haue a good dogge / we muste telle
his dylygence to our mayster / and soo they dyd /
& how he bote the wulf / and how he was ouer-
throwen / And yet sayd Certaynly yf he hadde
hadde

hadde euer mete ynough / the wulf had not
borne away the lambe / Thenne the lord com-
maunded to gyue hym plente of mete / wherof
the dogge took ageyne al strengthe and vertue /
And within a whyle after the wulf came ageyne
to the dogge / and sayd to hym in this manere /
My broder haue I not gyuen to the good coun-
ceyllle / And thenne the dogge anfuerd to hym /
Certaynly ye / wherof I thanke yow / And the
wulf sayd to the dogge / I praye the my broder
and my good frend that thow wylt yet gyue
another lambe / and the dogge sayd to hym /
Certaynly my broder / wel hit maye suffyse the
to haue had tweyne of them / ¶ Thenne sayd
the wulf to the dogge / ¶ At the left waye I
maye haue one for my labour and fallarye / That
shalt thow not haue sayd the dogge / Haft thow
not had good fallarye for to haue hadde two
lambes oute of my maysters herd / ¶ And the
wulf anfuerd to hym ageyne / My brother gyue
hit me yf hit please the / ¶ And after sayd the
dogge to hym / Nay I wylle not / And yf thow
takest hit ageynste my wylle / I promytte and
warne the / that neuer after tyme thow shalt
ete none / And thenne the wulf sayd to hym /
Allas my broder I deye for hunger / Counceyllle
me for goddys loue what I shalle doo / And the
dogge sayd to hym / I shal couceyllle the wel a
walle

walle of my mayfters celer is fallen doune / go
thyder this nyght and entre in hit / and there
thow mayft both ete and drynke after thy play-
fyr / For bothe breed fleſſhe and wyn ſhalt thou
fynde at plente there within / And thenne the⁵
wulf ſayd to hym / Allas my broder / beware
wel thenne / that thou accuſe ne deceyue me
not / And the dogge anſuerd / I waraunt the /
but doo thy faythe ſoo pryuely / that none of my
felawes knowe not of hit / ¶ And the wulf¹⁰
came at the nyght / and entryd in to the celer /
and / ete and dranke at his playfyre / In ſo
moche that he wexed dronke And whanne he
hadde dronke ſoo moche / that he was dronke /
He ſayd to hym ſelf / whanne the vylaynes ben¹⁵
fylled wyth metes / and that they ben dronke /
they fynge theyr ſonges / and I wherfore ſhold
I not fynge / ¶ And thenne he beganne to crye
and to howle / And the dogges herd the voys of
hym wherfore they beganne to barke and to²⁰
howle / And the ſeruaunts whiche herd them
ſayd / It is the wulf / whiche is entryd within
the celer / And thenne they al to gyder wenten
thyder / and kylled the wulf / And therfore
more deſpendeth the nygard than the large /²⁵
For auaryce was neuer good / For many one
ben whiche dare not ete ne drynke as nature
requyreth / But neuertheles euery one oughte
to

to use and lyue prudently of all fuche goodes
as god fendeth to hym /^x This fable also sheweth
to vs / that none ought to do ageynste his kynde /
as of the wulf whiche wexed dronke / for the
whiche cause he was flayne ^x

¶ The xiiij fable maketh mencyon of the fader
and of his thre children



He is not wyse / whiche for to haue
vanyte and his plesyr taketh debate
or stryf / As hit appiereth by this
fable / Of a man whiche hadde
thre children / and at the houre
of his dethe he byquethed / and gaf to them his
herytage or lyuehode / that is to wete a grete
pere tree / a gote & a mylle / ¶ And whanne
the fader was deed / the bretheren assembled
them thre to gyder / and wente before the Juge¹⁰
for to parte their lyuehode / and sayd to the
Juge / My lord the Juge / Oure fader is dede
whiche hath byquethed to vs thre bretheren al
his herytage and as moche of hit shold haue
the one as the other / And thenne the Juge¹⁵
demaunded / what was theyr lyuehode / And
they answerd a pere tree / a gote and a mylle /
And thenne the Juge sayd to them / that they
shold sette and make partyes egal of your lyue-
lede / And the one to haue as moche of hit as²⁰
the other / hit is a thyng moche dyffycyle to
doo / but to your aduys how shold ye parte it /
And

And thenne the eldest of the three bretheren
spake and sayd / I shalle take fro the pere tree
alle that is croked and vpright / And the second
sayd / I shalle take fro the pere tree alle that is
grene and drye / And the thyrd sayd I shalle
haue alle the rote / the pulle or maste and alle
the branches of the pere tree / ¶ And thenne
the Juge sayd to them / He that thenne shalle
haue the most parte of the tree / lete hym be
Juge / For I ne none other may know ne
vnderstande who shalle haue the more or lesse
parte / And therefore he that can or shalle proue
more openly / that he hath the most parte shal
be lord of the tree / ¶ And after the Juge de-
maunded of them / how that theyr fader had
deuyfied to them the gote / And they sayd to
hym / he that shalle make the fayrest prayer and
request must haue the gote / And thenne the
fyrste broder made his request / and sayd in this
manere / wold god that the goot were now foo-
grete that she myght drynke alle the water
whiche is vnder the cope of heuen / And that
whanne she hadde dronken it / she shold yet be
fore thursty ¶ The second sayd / I suppose that
the gote shalle be myn / For a fayrer demaunde
or request than thyn is I shalle now make / ¶ I
wold / that alle the hempe / and alle the Flaxe
and alle the wulle of the worlde were made in
one

one threed alone / And that the Gote were so
 grete / that with that fame threde men myght
 not bynde one of his legges / ¶ Thenne sayd
 thirddde / yet shalle be myn the gote / ¶ For I
 wolde / that he were soo grete / that yf an Egle⁵
 were at the vppermost of the heuen / he myght
 occupye and haue thenne as moche place as the
 Egle myght loke and see in hyght / in lengthe and
 in breed / ¶ And thenne the Juge sayde to them
 thre / who is he of yow thre / that hath maade the¹⁰
 fayrest prayer / Certaynly I nor none other canne
 not saye ne gyue the Jugement / And therefore
 the goote shalle be bylongynge to hym that of
 hit shalle say the trouthe ¶ And the Mylle how
 was hit deuyfed by your Fader for to be parted¹⁵
 amonge yow thre / ¶ And they anfuerde and
 sayde to the Juge / He that shalle be moost lyer /
 mooste euylle and most flowe ought to haue hit /²⁰
 ¶ Thenne say the eldest sone / I am moost flow-
 full / For many yeres I haue dwellyd in a grete
 hous / and laye vnder the conduytes of the fame /
 oute of the whiche felle vpon me alle the fowle
 waters / as pyffe / dysshe water / and alle other
 fylthe that wonderly stanke / In so moche that
 al my flesshe was roten therof / and myn eyen²⁵
 al blynd / and the durt vnder my back was a foot
 hyghe / And yet by my grete flouthe I hadde
 leuer to abyde there / than to tourne me / and
 haue lyfte me vp ¶ The

¶ The second sayd / I suppose wel / that the mylle shalle be myn / For yf I had fasted twenty yere / And yf I hadde come to a table couerd of al maner of precious and delyate metes / therof I myght wel ete yf I wold take of the best / I am so slouthfull that I maye not ete Withoute one shold putte the mete in to my mouthe /

¶ And the thyrde sayd / the mylle shalle be myn / For I am yet a gretter lyar and more slouthfull / than ony of yow bothe / For yf I hadde ben athurst vnto the dethe / And yf I found thenne my self within a fayre water into the neck / I wold rather deye / than to meue ones my heed for to drynke therof only one drop /

¶ Thenne sayd the Juge to them / Ye wote not what ye saye / For I nor none other maye not wel vnderstande yow / But the cause I remytte and put amonge yow thre / And thus they wente withoute ony sentence / For to folysshe demaunde behoueth a folysshe anfuere

¶ And therefore they ben fooles that wylle plete fuche vanyte one ageynste other / And many one ben fallen therefore in grete pouerte / For for a lytyl thyng ought to be made a lytyl plee

¶ The xiiij fable is of the wulf and of the foxe



One maye not be mayster without
 he haue be fyrste a disciple / As
 hit appiereth by this Fable / Of
 a Foxe whiche came toward a
 wulf / and sayd to hym / My lord⁵
 I praye yow that ye wylle be my godsep /
 And the wulf anfuerd / I am content / And the
 foxe toke to hym his sone prayenge hym that to
 his sone he wold shewe and lerne good doctryne /¹⁰
 the whiche the wulf tooke / and wente with hym¹⁵
 vpon a montayne / And thenne he sayd to the
 lytyll foxe whanne the beestes shalle come to the
 feldes calle me / And the foxe wente and sawe
 fro the top of the hylle / how the beestes were
 comynge to the feldes / and forth with he wente²⁰
 and called his godfader / and sayd My godfader
 the beestes comen in to the feldes / And the wulf
 demaunded of hym / what bestes are they / and
 the fox anfuerd / they be bothe kyne & swyn to
 gyder / Wel sayd the wulf / I gyue no force for²⁵
 them / lete them go for the dogges ben with
 them / And soone after the foxe dyd loke on
 another fyde / and perceyued the mare whiche
 wente

wente to the feldes / and he wente to his god-
fader & fayd / ^xgodfader the mare is goo to the
feldes / & the wulf demaunded of hym where
aboute is she / ^xAnd the foxe anfuered she is by
the forest / And the wulf fayd / ^xNow go we to
dyner / And the wulf with his godfone entryd
in to the wood / and came to the mare / ^x¶ The
wulf perceyued wel and sawe a yonge colt /
whiche was by his moder / ^xthe wulf tooke hym
by the neck with his teethe and drewe hit within
the wood / and ete & deuoured hym bytwene
them bothe / ^x¶ And whan they had wel eten
the godson fayd to his godfader / My godfader
I commaunde yow to god and moche I thanke
yow your doctrine / For wel ye haue taught me / ¹⁵
in so moche / that now I am a grete clerke / &
now I wylle goo toward my moder / ^xAnd thenne
the wulf fayd to his godson / My godfone yf
thow goft away / thow shalt repente the ther-
fore / For thow hast not yet wel studyed / and ²⁰
knowest not yet the Sylogysmes / ¶ Ha my
godfader fayd the Foxe / I knowe wel al / ¶ And
the wulf fayd to hym / Sythe thow wylt goo /
to god I commaunde the / ^x

¶ And whanne the Foxe was come toward ²⁵
his moder / she fayd to hym / ^xCertaynly / thow
hast not yet studyed ynough / ¶ And he thenne
fayd to her / Moder I am soo grete a clerke that

I

I can cast the deuylle fro the clyf/ ¹⁰ Lete vs go
 chace/ and ye shalle see yf I haue lerned ought
 or not/ ¶ And the yong foxe wold haue done
 as his godfader the wulf dede/ and said to his
 moder/ make good watche/ ¶ And whanne¹⁵
 the beestes shalle come to the feld/ lete me
 haue therof knowlege/ ²⁰ And his moder sayd/
 wel my sone so shalle I doo/ ²⁵ She maade good
 watche/ And whanne she sawe that bothe kyne
 and fwyne wente to the feldes/ she sayd thenne³⁰
 to hym/ My sone the kyne and the fwyn to gyder
 ben in the feldes/ And he anfuerd/ ³⁵ My moder
 of them I retche not/ lete them goo/ for the
 dogges kepe them wel/ ⁴⁰ ¶ And within a short
 whyle after/ the moder sawe come the mare⁴⁵
 nyghe vnto a wode/ and wente/ and sayd to
 her sone/ ⁵⁰ My sone the mare is nyghe the wood
 And he anfuerd/ My moder these ben good
 tydynge/ ⁵⁵ Abyde ye here/ For I goo to fetch
 our dyner/ and wente and entred in to the⁶⁰
 Wode/ And after wold doo as his godfader
 dyd before/ and wente and tooke the mare by
 the neck/ ⁶⁵ But the mare tooke hym with her
 teeth/ and bare hym to the sheepherd And
 the moder cryed from the top of the hylle/⁷⁰
 My sone lete goo the mare/ and come hyder
 ageyne/ but he myght not/ For the mare
 held hym fast with her teethe/ ¶ And as the
 sheepherde

sheepherde came for to kylle hym / the moder
cryed and fayd wepynge / *x* Allas my sone thow
dydest not lerne wel / And haft ben to lytel
a whyle atte schole / wherfore thow must now
deye myferably / *x* And the sheepherdes took and ⁵
flewe hym / For none ought to fay hym self
mayster withoute that he haue fyrst studyed /
For some wene to be a grete clerke / that can
nothyng of clergie / *x*

¶ The xv fable is of the dogge / of the wulf and
of the whether



Rete folye is to a fool that hath no
myght / that wylle begyle another
stronger thā hym self / as reher-
ceth this fable of a fader of
famylle whiche had a grete herd⁵
or flock of sheep / and had a grete dogge for to
kepe them which was wel stronge / And of his
voys all the wolues were aferd wherfore the
sheepherd slepte more surely / but it happed /
that this dogge for his grete age deyde / wher-¹⁰
fore the sheepherdes were fore troubled and
wrothe / and sayd one to other / we shall no
more slepe at oure ease by cause that our dogge
is dede / for the wulues shall now come and
ete our sheep / ¶ And thenne a grete wether¹⁵
fyers and prowde / whiche herd alle these wordes
came to them and sayd / I shall gyue yow good
counceyll / Shaue me / and put on me the
skynne of the dogge And whanne the wulues
shall see me / they shall haue grete fere of me /²⁰
¶ And whanne the wulues came and sawe the
wether clothed with the skynne of the dogge /
they

they beganne all to flee / and ranne away / ¶ It
happed on a day that a wulf whiche was fore
hongry / came and toke a lambe / and after ran
awaye therwith / ¶ And thenne the sayd wether
ranne after hym / And the wulf whiche supposed
that it had ben the dogge shote thryes by the
waye for the grete fere that he had / And ranne
euer as fast as he coude / and the wether also
ranne after hym withoute cesse / tyl that he
ranne thurgh a busshe full of sharpe thornes / the
whiche thornes rente and brake alle the dogges
skynne / whiche was on hym / And as the wulf
loked and sawe behynde hym / beyng moche
doubtous of his dethe / sawe and perceyued alle
the decepcion and falshe de of the wether / And
forthwith retorned ageynste hym / and demaunded
of hym / what beest arte thou / And the wether
ansuerd to hym in this maner / My lord I am a
wether whiche playeth with the / And the wulf
sayd / Ha mayster ought ye to playe with your
mayster and with your lord / thou hast made me
so fore aferd / that by the waye as I ranne before
the / I dyte shyte thre grete toordes / And thenne
the wulf ledde hym unto the place where as he
had shyte / sayenge thus to hym / loke hyther /
callest thou this a playe / I take hit not for playe /
For now I shalle shewe to the / how thou ought-
est not to playe so with thy lord / And thenne
the

the wulf took and kylled hym / and deuoured
and ete hym / ¶ And therfore he that is wyfe
muſte take good hede / how he playeth with
hym whiche is wyfer / more ſage / and more
ſtronger / than hym ſelf is /

¶ The xviij fable maketh mencyon of the man / of
the lyon & of his sone



He that reffuseth the good doctryne
of his fader / yf euyl happe cometh
to hym / it is but ryght / As to vs
reherceth this fable of a labourer /
whiche somtyme lyued in a deserte
of his cultyuyng and laboure / In this deserte
was a lyon / whiche wasted and destroyed all
the fede / which euery daye the sayd labourer
sewed / and also this lyon destroyed his trees /
And by cause that he bare and dyd to hym so
grete harme and dommage / he made an hedge /
to the whiche he putte and sette cordes and
nettes for to take lyon / And ones as this lyon
came for to ete corne he entried within a nette /
& was taken / And thenne the good man came
thyder / and bete and smote hym so wonderly /
that vnnethe he myght scape fro deth / And by
cause that the lyon sawe that he myght not
escape the subtylyte of the man / he took his
lytyl lyon / and went to dwelle in another
Regyon / and within a lytyl whyle after that
the lyon was wel growen and was fyers &
stronge

stronge he demaunded of his fader / My fader
 be we of this Regyon / Nay sayd the fader /
 For we ben fledde away fro oure land / And
 thenne the lytyl lyon asked / wherfore / And
 the fader anfuerd to hym / For the subtylyte of
 the man / And the lytyl lyon demaunded of
 hym what man is that / And his fader sayd to
 hym / he is not soo grete ne so stronge as we
 be / but he is more subtyle and more Ingenyous /
 than we be / and thenne sayd the sone to the¹⁰
 fader / I shalle goo auenge me on hym And
 the grete lyon sayd to hym / goo not / For yf
 thow goost thyder thow shalt repente the ther-
 fore / and shalt doo lyke a fole And the sone
 anfuerd to his fader / Ha by my heed I shalle goo¹⁵
 thyder / and shalle see what he can doo / And
 as he wente for to fynde the man / he mette an
 oxe within a medowe / and an hors whose back
 was al fleyen / and fore / to whome he said in
 this manere / who is he that hath ledde yow²⁰
 hyder / and that so hath so hurted yow / And
 they sayd to hym / It is the man / ¶ And
 thenne he sayd ageyne to them / Certaynly /
 here is a wonder thyng / I praye yow / that
 ye wylle shewe hym to me And they wente²⁵
 and shewed to hym the labourer / which ered
 the erthe / And the lyon forthwith and with-
 oute sayinge of ony moo wordes wente toward
 the

the man / to whome he sayd in this maner /
Ha man thow haft done ouer many euyls /
bothe to me and to my Fader / and in lyke
wyse to oure beeftes / Wherfore I telle the that
to me thow shalt doo Justyce / And the man
ansuerd to hym / I promytte and warne the /
that yf thow come nyghe me I shalle flee with
this greete clubbe / And after with this knyfe I
shall flee the / And the lyon sayd to hym /
Come thenne before my fader / and he as kynge
shalle doo to vs good Justyce / And thenne the
man sayd to the lyon / I am content / yf that
thow wylt fwere to me / that thow shalt not
touche me / tyll that we ben in the prefence of
thy fader / And in lyke wyse I shalle fwere to
the / that I shal go with the vnto the prefence
of thy fader / And thus the lyon and the man
fwered eche one to other / and wente toward
the grete lyon / and the man beganne to goo
by the way where as his cordes and nettes were
dressed / And as they wente / the lyon lete hym
self falle within a corde / and by the feet he was
take / so that he myghte not farther goo / And
by cause he coude not goo he sayd to the man /
O man I prey the that thow wilt helpe me /
For I may no more goo / And the man answerd
to hym / I am fworne to the that I shalle not
touche the vnto the tyme that we ben before thy
fader /

fader / And as the lyon supposed to haue vnbound
hym self for to scape / he fylle in to another nette
And thenne the lyon beganne to crye after the
man / fayenge to hym in this manere / O good
man I praye the that thou wilt vnbynde me /
And the man beganne to smyte hym vpon the
hede / ¶ And thenne whanne the lyon sawe
that he myght not scape / he sayd to the man /
I praye the / that thou smyte me no more vpon
the heed / but vpon myn erys / by cause that I
wold not here the good counceyll of my fader /
And thenne the man beganne to smyte hym at
the herte and flewe hym / the whiche thyng
happeth ofte to many children whiche ben
hanged or by other maner executed and put to
dethe / by cause that they wil not byleue the
doctryne of theyr faders and moders / ne obeye
to them by no wyfe

¶ The xvi fable is of the knyght and of the
seruaunt / the whiche fond the Foxe /



Any ben that for theyr grete lesynges
supposen to put vnder alle the
world / but euer at last theyr le-
synges ben knowen and many-
fested / as hit appiereth by this
fable of a knyght whiche somtyme wente with
an archer of his thurgh the lande / And as they
rode / they fonde a Fox And the knyght sayd
to the archer in good soothe I see a grete Foxe /
And the archer beganne to saye to his lord / My
lord / merueylle ye therof / I haue ben in a Regyon
where as the Foxes ben as grete as an oxe / And
the knyght ansuerd In good soothe theyr skynnes
were good for to make mantels with / yf skynners
myght haue them / And as they were rydyng /
they felle in many wordes and deuyfes / And
thenne by cause the knyght perceyued wel the
lesynge of his Archer / he beganne to make
preyers and orysones to the goddes / for to make his
Archer aferd / And sayd in this manere / O Jupiter
god almyghty / ¶ I preye the / that this daye
thow wylt kepe vs fro all lesynges / so that we may
sauf

fauf passe thys flood and this grete Ryuer whiche
is here before vs / and that we may surely come
to oure hows / And whanne the Archer herd
the prayer and oryson of his lord / he was moche
abasshed ¶ And thenne the Archer demaunded
of hym / my lord wherfore prayest thou now soo
deuoutely / And the knyght ansuerd wost thou not
wel that hit is wel knowen and manyfested / that
we soone must passe a ryght grete Ryuer / And
that he who on al this daye shalle haue made ony
lesynge / yf he entre in hit / he shalle neuer come
oute of hit ageyne / Of the whiche wordes the
Archer was moche doubtous and dredeful / And
as they had ryden a lytyl waye / they fond a lytyl
Ryuer / wherfore the Archer demaunded of his
lord / Is this the flood whiche we must passe / Nay
sayd the knyght / For hit is wel gretter / O my
lord I saye by cause that the foxe whiche ye sawe
may wel haue swymmed and passed ouer this lytyl
water / And the lord sayd / I care not therfore /
¶ And after that they had ryden a lytyl ferther /
they fond another lytyll Ryuer / And the Archer
demaunded of hym / Is this the flood that ye spake
of to me / Nay sayd he / For hit is gretter &
more brode / And the Archer sayd ageyne to
hym / My lord I say so / by cause that the foxe
of the whiche I spake of to daye was not gretter
than a calf / ¶ And thene the knyght herkyng
the

the dyffmylacion of his archer / answerd not /
And soo they rode forthe so longe that they fond
yet another Ryuer / And thenne the Archer
demaunded of his lord / Is this the same hit /
Nay sayd the knyght / but soone we shalle come
therto / O my lord I saye so by cause that the
Foxe wherof I spak to yow this daye / was not
gretter than a sheep / ¶ And when they had
ryden vnto euen tyme they fond a grete Ryuer
and of a grete brede / ¶ And whan tharcher
sawe hit / he began al to shake for fere / and de-
maunded of his lord / My lord is this the Ryuer /
Ye sayd the knyght / O my lord I ensure you on
my feythe / that the Foxe of the whiche I spake
to daye / was not gretter than the Foxe / whiche
we sawe to day / wherfore I knowlege and con-
fesse to yow my synne / ¶ And thenne the knyght
beganne to smyle / and sayd to his Archer in this
manere / Also this Ryuer is no wors than the
other whiche we sawe to fore and haue passed
thurgh them / And thenne the archer had grete
vergoyne and was shameful / by cause that he
myght no more couere his lesynge / And ther-
fore hit is fayre and good for to saye euer the
trouthe / and to be trewe bothe in speche and in
dede / For a lyer is euer begyled / and his le-
synge is knowen and manifested on hym to his
grete shame & dommage

¶ Here

Here after folowen some Fables of Esope
after the newe translacion / the whiche
Fables ben not founden ne wretton
in the bookes of the philo-
sopher Romulus

¶ The fyrst fable is of the Egle and of the
rauen



One ought to take on hym self to
doo a thyng / whiche is peryllous
without he fele hym self strong
ynou3 to doo hit / As reherceth
this Fable / Of an Egle / whiche
fleyng took a lambe / wherof the Rauē hadde
grete enuye wherfor vpon another tyme as / the
sayd rauē sawe a grete herd of sheep / by his
grete enuy & pryde & by his grete oultrage de-
scended on them / And by suche fache and
manere smote a wether that his clowes abode to
the flyes of hit / In soo moche that he coude
not flee away / The sheep herd thenne came and
brake and toke his wynges from hym / And after
bare hym to his children to playe them with /
And demaunded of hym / what byrd he was /
And the Rauē ansuerd to hym / I supposed to
haue ben an Egle / And by my ouerwenyng I
wende to haue take a lambe / as the egle dyd /
but now I knowe wel that I am a Rauē / wher-
fore the feble ought not in no wyse to compare
hym

hym felf to the ftronge / For fomtyme when he
fupposeth to doo more than he may / he falleth
in to grete defhonour / as hit appiereth by this
prefent Fable / Of a Rauen / whiche fupposen
to haue ben as ftronge as the egle x

¶ The second Fable is of the egle and of the
wefel



One for what so euer myght that
he haue / ought not to despreyse
the other / As hit appiereth by
this present fable of an Egle /
whiche chaced somtyme after an
hare And by cause that the hare myght not
resyste ne withstande ageynst the egle / he de-
maunded ayde and helpe of the wesel / the whiche
tooke hym in her kepynge / And by cause that
the egle sawe the wesel soo lytyl / he despreyed
her / and before her toke the hare / wherof the
wesel was wrothe / And therfore the wesell wente /
and beheld the Egles nest whiche was vpon a
hyghe tree / And whanne she sawe hit / the lytell
wesell clymmed vpon a tree / and toke and cast
doune to the ground the yonge egles wherfore
they deyde / And for this cause was the Egle
moche wrothe and angry / and after wente to the
god Jupiter And prayd hym that he wold fynde
hym a sure place where as he myght leye
his egges and his lytyl chykynes / And Jupiter
graunted hit and gaf hym suche a gyfte / that
whan

whan the tyme of chilynge shold come / that
 she shold make her yong Egles within his bosome /
 And thenne whanne the wewel knewe this / she
 gadred and asssembled to gyder grete quantite of
 ordure of fylthe / and therof made an hyghe hylle
 for to lete her self falle fro the top of hit in to
 the bosome of Jupiter / And whanne Jupiter
 felte the stench of the fylthe / he beganne to
 shake his bosome / and both the wewel and the
 10 egges of the egle felle doune to the erthe / And
 thus were alle the egges broken and lost / And
 whanne the Egel knewe hit / she made auowe /
 that she shold neuer make none egles / tyll of
 the wewel she were assuerd / And therefore none
 15 how stronge and myghty that he be / ought not
 despreyse somme other / For there is none foo
 lytyl / but that somtyme he may lette and auenge
 hym self / wherfore doo thou ne displayfyr to
 none / that displayfyr come not to the x

¶ The thyrddde fable is of the Foxe and of
the gote



HE whiche is wyse and sage ought
fyrst to loke and behold the ende /
or he begynneth the werke or
dede / as hyer appiereth by this
fable / Of a foxe & of a gote /
that somtyme descended and wente doune in
to a depe welle / for to drynke. ^x And Whanne
they had wel dronke / by cause that thei coude
not come vpward ageyne / the Foxe sayd to the
gote in this maner / ^x my frend yf thow wylt helpe
me / we shall sone ben bothe oute of this welle /
For yf thow wylt sette thy two feet ageynste the
walle / I shal wel lepe vpon the / & vpon thy
hornes And thenne I shal lepe oute of this
welle / ¶ And whanne I shalle be oute of hit /
thow shalt take me by the handes / and I shal
plucke and drawe the oute of the welle / ^x And
at this request the gote / acorded and ansuerd /
I wylle wel / And thene the gote lyfte vp his
feet ageynst the walle / and the foxe dyd so
moche by his malyce that he got out of the
welle / ^x And whan he was oute / he began to
loke

loke on the gote / whiche was within the welle /
 & thenne the gote sayd to hym / help me now
 as thou hast promysed / *x* And thenne the foxe
 beganne to lawhe and to fcorne hym / and sayd
 to hym / *x* O mayster goote / yf thou haddest be
 wel wyfe with thy fayre berde / or euer thou
 haddest entryd in to the welle / thou sholdest
 fyrst haue taken hede / how thou sholdest haue
 comen oute of hit ageyne / *x*

¶ And therefore he whiche is wyfe / yf he¹⁰
 wyfely wyllle gouerne hym felf / ought to take
 euer good hede to the ende of his werke

¶ The fourthe fable is of the catte and of
the chyken.



Hence whiche is fals of kynde / & hath
begonne to deceyue some other /
euer he wyl use his craft / As it
appiereth by this present Fable
of a kat whiche somtyme toke a
chyken / the whiche he beganne strongly to
blame / for to haue fonde somme cause that he
myght ete hit / and sayd to hym in this manere /
Come hyther thou chyken / thou dost none
other good but crye alle the nyght / thou
letest not the men slepe / And thenne the chyken
anfuerd to hym / I doo hit for theyre grete
prouffite / And ouer ageyne the catte sayd to
hym / yet is there wel wors / For thou arte
an inceste & lechour For thou knowest natu-
rally both thy moder and thy doughter / And
thenne the chyken sayd to the cat / I doo hit
by cause that my mayster maye haue egges for
his etynge / And that hys mayster for his prou-
ffyte gaf to hym bothe the moder and the
doughter for to multiplye the egges / And
thenne the catte sayd to hym / by my feythe
godsep

godſep thow haſt excuſacions ynough / but
neuertheleſſ thow ſhalt paſſe thurgh my throte /
for I ſuppoſe not to faſte this day for alle thy
wordes / ¶ And thus is it of hym whiche is
cuſtommed to lyue by rauyn / For he can not
kepe ne abſteyne hym ſelf fro hit / For alle
the excuſacions that be leyd on hym.

¶ The 6 fable is of the Foxe and of the busshe.



Men ouzt not to demaude ne aske
 help of them that ben more cus-
 tomed to lette than to do good
 or prouffit / as it appereth by this
 fable of a fox which for to scape
 the peril to be taken wente vpon a thorne
 busshe / whiche hurted hym fore / And wep-
 ynge sayd to the busshe / I am come as to my
 refuge vnto the / and thow hast hurted me vnto
 the dethe / And thenne the bushe sayd to hym /
 thow hast erred / and wel thou hast begyled
 thy self / For thow supposest to haue taken me
 as thow arte custommed to take chekyns and
 hennes / ¶ And therfore men ought not to
 helpe them whiche ben acustomed to doo euylle /
 but men ought rather to lette them. x

¶ The vij fable is of the man and of the god of
the wodes



F the euylle man som tyme prouffiteth
 some other / he doth hit not by
 his good wylle / but by force / As
 reherceth to vs this fable / Of a
 man whiche had in his hows an
 ydolle the whiche oftyme he adoured as his god /
 to whome ofte he prayed that he wold gyue to
 hym moche good / And the more that he prayed
 hym / the more he faylled / And became pouere /
 wherfore the man was wel wrothe ageynst his
 ydolle / and took hit by the legges / and smote
 the hede of hit so strongly ageynst the walle / so
 that it brake in to many pyeces / Oute of the
 whiche ydolle yssued a ryght grete tresoure /
 wherof the man was ful gladde and Joyous /
 And thenne the man sayd to his ydolle / Now
 knowe I wel / that thou art wycked / euyl and
 peruers / For whanne I haue worshipped the /
 thou hast not holpen me / And now whanne I
 haue bete the / thou hast moche done for me /
 ¶ And therfore the euylle man whanne he doth
 ony good / it is not of his good wylle / but by
 force

¶ The vij fable is of a fyfsher



Alle thynges which ben done & made
in theyr tyme & season ben wel
made / as by this present fable it
appereth Of a fyfsher whiche som-
tyme touched his bagpype nyhe
the Ryuer for to make the fyfshes to daunce /
¶ And whan he sawe that for none songe that
he coude pype / the fyfshes wold not daūse / As
wroth dyd cast his nettes in to the Ryuer / & toke
of fyfshes grete quantite / And whanne he had
drawe oute his nettes oute of the water / the
fyfshes beganne to lepe and to daūse / and thenne
he sayd to them / Certaynly hit appiereth now
wel / that ye be euylle beestes / For now whanne
ye be taken / ye lepe and daunse / And whanne
I pyped and played of my muse or bag pype ye
dayned / ne wold not daunse / Therefore hit ap-
piereth wel that the thynges whiche ben made
in season / ben wel made and done by reason

¶ The eyght fable is of the catte and of the rat



Hath which is wyse / and that ones
 hath ben begyled / ought not to
 truste more hym that hath begyled
 hym As reherceth this Fable of a
 catte which wente in to a hows /
 where as many rats were / the which he dyd
 ete eche one after other / ¶ And whanne the
 rats perceyued the grete fyerfnes and crudelyte
 of the catte / held a councyll to gyder where
 as they determyned of one comyn wylle / that
 they shold no more hold them ne come nor goo
 on the lowe floore . wherfore one of them moost
 auncyent profered and sayd to al the other suche
 wordes / ¶ My bretheren and my frendes / ye
 knowe wel / that we haue a grete enemye / which
 is a grete persecutour ouer vs alle / to whome we
 may not resyste / wherfor of nede we must hold
 our self vppn the hyghe balkes / to thende that
 he may not take vs / Of the which propofycion
 or wordes the other rats were wel content and
 apayd / and byleuyd this councyll / And whanne
 the kat knewe the councyll of the rats / he
 hynge hym self by his two feet behynd at a pynne
 of

of yron whiche was flyked at a balke / feynynge
hym felf to be dede / And whanne one of the
rats lokynge dounward sawe the katte beganne
to lawhe and fayd to the cat / O my Frend yf
I supposed that thow were dede / I shold goo
doun / but wel I knowe the so fals & peruers /
that thow mayst wel haue hanged thy felf / fayn-
ynge to be dede / wherfore I shall not goo doun /
And therfore he that hath ben ones begyled by
somme other / ought to kepe hym wel fro the
same

¶ The ix fable is of the labourer and of the
pyelarge



He whiche is taken with the wicked
and euyl ouzte to suffre payne
and punycyon as they / As it
appiereth by this fable / Of a la-
bourer whiche somtyme dresseyd
and sette his gynnes and nettes for to take the
ghees and the cranes / Whiche ete his corne / It
happed thenne that ones amonge a grete meyny
of ghees and cranes / he took a pyelarge / whiche
prayd the labourer in this maner / I praye the
lete me go / For I am neyther goos ne cranne
nor I am not come hyther for to do the ony
eylle / The labourer beganne thenne to lawhe /
and sayd to the pyelarge / yf thou haddest not be
in theyr felauship / thou haddest not entryd in to
my nettes / ne haddest not be taken / And by
cause that thou arte founde and taken with them /
thou shalt be punysshed as they shalle be Ther-
fore none ought to hold companye with the euylle
with oute he wylle suffre the punycion of them
whiche ben punysshed

¶ The tenth fable is of the child / whiche kepte
the sheep



He whiche is acustomed to make les-
ynges / how be it that he saye
trouthe / Yet men byleue hym
not / As reherceth this fable / Of
a child whiche somtyme kepte
sheep / the whiche cryed ofte withoute cause /
sayenge / Allas for goddes loue socoure yow me /
For the wulf wylle ete my sheep / And whanne
the labourers that cultyued and ered the erthe
aboute hym / herd his crye / they come to helpe
hym / the whiche came so many tymes / and fond
nothyng / And as they sawe that there were no
wulues / they retorned to theyr labourrage / And
the child dyd so many tymes for to playe hym /
¶ It happed on a day that the wulf came / and
the child cryed as he was acustomed to doo /
And by cause that the labourers supposed / that
hit had not ben trouthe / abode styll at theyr
laboure / wherfore the wulf dyd ete the sheep /
For men bileue not lyghtly hym / whiche is
knownen for a lyer x

¶ The xj fable is of the ante and of the columbe



One ought to be slowful of the good
 whiche he receyueth of other / As
 reherceth this fable of an Ante /
 whiche came to a fontayne for
 to drynke / and as she wold haue
 dronke she felle within the fontayn / vpon the
 whiche was a columbe or douue / whiche feyng
 that the Ante shold haue ben drowned withoute
 helpe / took a braunche of a tree / & cast it to
 her for to saue her self / ¶ And the Ante wente
 anone upon the braunche and saued her / ¶ And
 anone after came a Fawkoner / whiche wold haue
 take the douue / And thenne the Ante whiche
 sawe that the Fawkoner dressyd his nettes came
 to his foote / and soo fast pryked hit / that she
 caused hym to smyte the erthe with his foote /
 and therwithe made soo gret noyse / that the douue
 herd hit / wherfore she flewhe awaye or the
 gynne and nettes were al sette / ¶ And therefore
 none ought to forgete the benyfyce whiche he
 hath receyued of some other / for slowfulnesse is
 a grete synne

¶ The xij fable is of the Bee and of Jupyter



Ow the euyl which men wysshe to
 other / cometh to hym whiche
 wyssheth hit / as hit appiereth by
 this fable / of a Bee whiche offred
 and gaf to Jupyter a pyce of hony /
 wherof Jupyter was moche Joyous / And thenne
 Jupyter sayd to the bee / demaunde of me what
 thow wylt / and I shalle graunte and gyue hit to
 the gladly / And thenne the Bee prayed hym in
 this manere / God almyghty I pray the that thow
 wylt gyue to me and graūte / that who so euer
 shal come for to take away my hony / yf I pryke
 hym / he may sodenly deye / And by cause that
 Jupyter loued the humayn lygnage he sayd to
 the Bee / Suffyse the / that who so euer shalle
 goo to take thy hony / yf thow pryke or stynge
 hym / Incontynent thow shalt deye / And thus
 her prayer was tourned to her grete dommage /
 For men ought not to demaunde of god / but suche
 thynges that ben good and honest

¶ The xiiij fable is of a carpenter



N as moche as god is more propyce
and benygne to the good and holy /
moche more he punyssheth the
wycked and euylle / As we may
see by this fable / Of a carpenter⁵
whiche cutte wode vpon a Ryuer for to make a
temple to the goddes / And as he cutte wode /
his axe felle in the Ryuer / wherfore he beganne
to wepe and to calle helpe of the goddes / And
the god Mercurye for pyte appiered before hym¹⁰
And demaunded of hym wherfore he wepte / and
shewed to hym an axe of gold / and demaunded
of hym yf hit was the axe whiche he had lost /
& he sayd nay / And after the god shewed to hym
another axe of syluer / And semblably said nay¹⁵
And by cause that Mercurius sawe that he was
good and trewe / he drewe his axe oute of the
water / and took hit to hym with moche good
that he gaf to hym / And the carpenter told thy-
story to his felawes / of the whiche one of them²⁰
came in to the same place for to cutte woode as
his felawe dyd before / & lete falle his axe within
the water / and beganne / to wepe and to de-
maund

maund the helpe and ayde of the goddes / And
 thenne Mercury appiered to fore hym / and shewed
 to hym an axe of gold / and demaunded of hym
 in fuche manere / Is the fame hit that thow haft
 loft / And he anfuerd to Mercury / ye fayre fyre
 and myghty god the fame is it / And Mercury
 feynge the malyce of the vylayne gaf to hym
 neyther the fame ne none other / and lefte hym
 wepyng / For god whiche is good and Just re-
 warded the good and trewe in this world / or
 eche other after his deferte and punyssheth the
 eyllle and Iniuste

¶ The xiiij fable is of a yonge theef and of his
moder



He whiche is not chaftyed at the begynnyng is euyl and peruers at the ende / As hit appiereth by this fable of a yonge child whiche of his yongthe beganne to stele / and to be a theef / And the theftys whiche he maad / he broughte to his moder / and the moder toke them gladly / & in no wyse she chaftyed hym / And after that he had done many theftys / he was taken / and condempned to be hanged / And as men ledde hym to the Justyce / his moder folowed hym and wepte sore / And thenne the child prayed to the Justyce / that he myght saye one word to his moder / And as he approuched to her / made semblaunt to telle her somme wordes at her ere / & with his teeth he bote of her nose / wherof the Justyce blamed hym / And he anfuerd in this manere / My lordes ye haue no cause to blame me therfore / For my moder
is

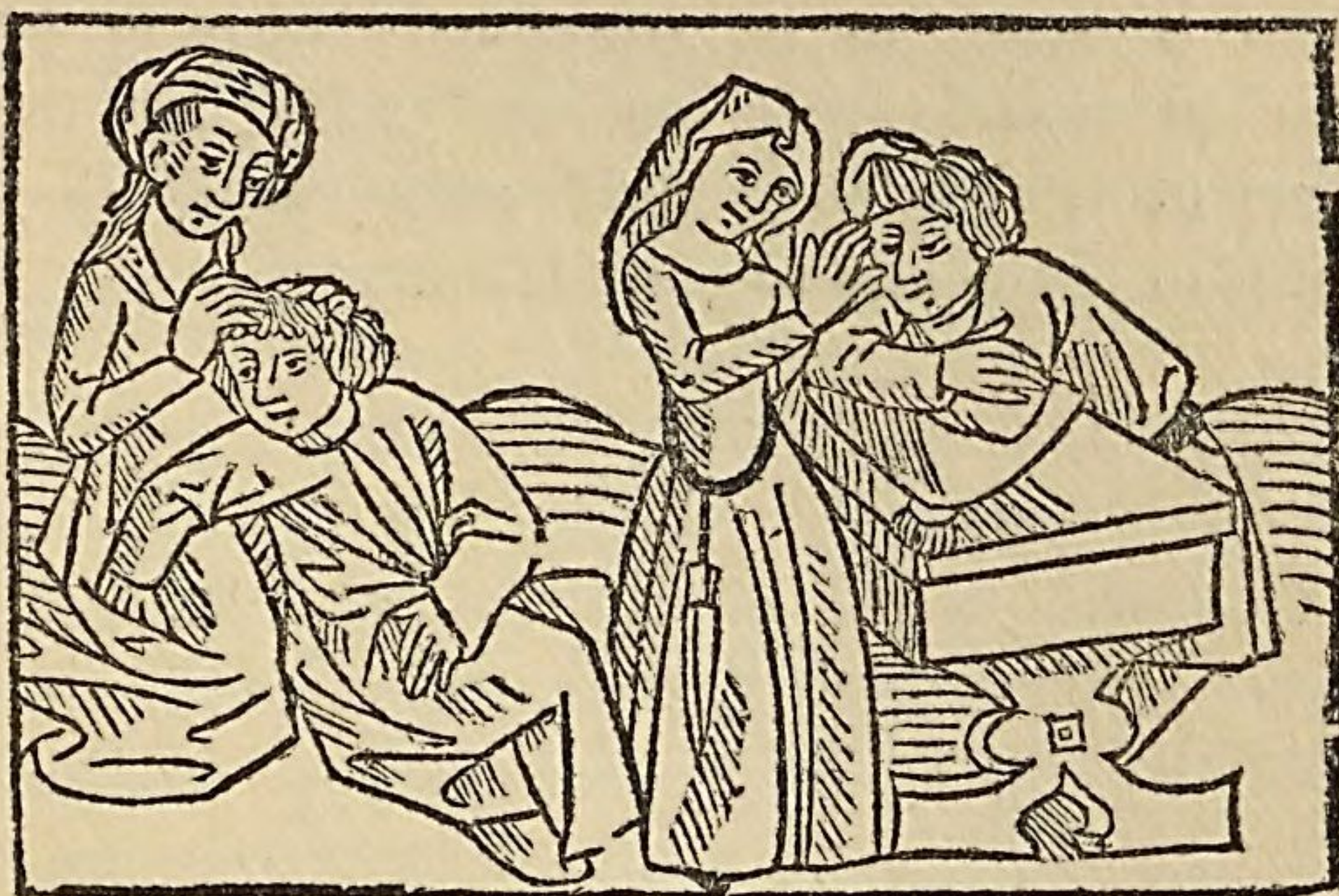
is cause of my deth For yf she had wel chaftyfed
me / I had not come to this shame and vergoyne /
For who loueth wel / wel he chaftyfeth / And
therfore chaftyse wel youre children / to thende /
that ye falle not in to fuche a caas

¶ The xv fable is of the flee and of the man.



He that dothe euyl / how be hit
that the euylle be not grete
men ought not to leue hym
vnpunysshed / As it appereth
by this fable / Of a man whiche
took a flee whiche bote hym / to whome the
man sayd in this manere / Fle why bytest thou
me / and letest me not slepe / and the flee
ansuerd It is my kynd to doo soo / wherfore
I praye the that thou wylt not put me to
dethe / And the man beganne to lawhe / &
sayd to the flee / how be it / that thou mayst
not hurte me fore / Neuertheless / to the be-
houeth not to prycke me / wherfore thou shalt
dye / For men ought not to leue none euyl
vnpunysshed how be hit that hit be not grete.

¶ The xvi fable is of the hufbond and of his
two wyues.



No thyng is werse to the man than
the woman / As it appereth by
this fable / of a man of a meane
age / whiche tooke two wyues /
that is to wete an old / & one
yong / whiche were both dwellyng in his hows /
& by cause that the old desyred to haue his
loue / she plucked the blak herys fro his hede
and his berde / by cause he shold the more be lyke
her / And the yonge woman at the other fyde
plucked

plucked and drewe oute alle the whyte herys /
to the ende / that he shold seme the yonger /
more gay and fayrer in her fyghte / And thus
the good man abode withoute ony here on his
hede And therfore hit is grete folye to the
auncyent to wedde them self ageyne / For to
them is better to be vnwedded / than to be
euer in trouble with an euyl wyf / for the
tyme in whiche they shold reſte them / they
put it to payne and to grete labour.

¶ The xviij fable is of the labourer and of his children.



He that laboureth and werketh continually maye not faylle to haue plente of goodes / as it appiereth by this present fable / Of a good man labourer / whiche all his lyf had laboured and wrought / and was ryche / and whan he shold deye / he sayd to his children / My children I muste now deye / and my tresour I haue leste in my vyne / And after that the good man was dede / his children whiche supposed that his tresour had ben in the vyne / dyd nothyng al day but delued hit / & it bare more fruyte than dyd before / ¶ For who trauaylleth wel / he hath euer brede ynough for to ete / And he that werketh not dyeth for hunger.

¶ Here syngeſſen the Fables of Esope

¶ And after foloweth the
fables of Auyan

¶ The fyrst fable is of the old woman and of
the wulf



Men ought not by byleue on al maner
spyrytes / As reherceth this fable
of an old woman / which said to
her child bicause that it wept /
certeynly if thow wepst ony more /
I shal make the to be ete of the wulf / & the
wulf heryng this old woman / abode styll to fore
the yate / & supposed to haue eten the old
womans child / & by cause that the wulf had soo
longe taryed there that he was hongry / he re-
turned and went ageyne in to the wood / And
the shewulf demaunded of hym / why hast thow
not brought to me some mete / And the wulf
anfuerd / by cause / that the old woman hath be-
gyled me / the whiche had promysed to me to
gyue to me her child for to haue ete hym / And
at the lasse I hadde hit not / And therefore men
ought in no wyse to trust the woman / And he
is wel a fole that setteth his hope and truste in a
woman / And therefore truste them not / and thow
shalt doo as the sage and wyse

¶ The second fable is of the tortoise and of the
other byrdes



HE that enhaunceth hym self more
than he oughte to do To hym
oughte not to come noo good /
As hit appiereth by this present
fable / Of a tortoise / whiche said
to the byrdes / yf ye lyft me vp wel hyghe fro
the ground to the ayer I shalle shewe to yow
grete plente of precius stones / And the Egle toke
her and bare her so hyghe / that she myghte not
see the erthe / And the Egle sayd to her shewe
me now these precius stones that thow promysed
to shewe to me / And by cause that the tortoise
myght not see in the erthe / and that the Egle
knewe wel that he was deceyued / thrested his
clowes in to the tortoses bely / and kyllled hit /
For he that wylle haue and gete worship and
glorye may not haue hit withoute grete laboure /
Therefore hit is better and more sure / to kepe
hym lowely than to enhaunce hym self on hyghe /
and after to deye shamefully and myserably /
¶ For men sayn comynly / who so mounteth
hyher / than he shold / he falleth lower than he
wold

¶ The thyrd fable is of the two Creuyffes



HE which will teche and lerne some
 other / ought first to corryge &
 examyne hym self / as it appereth
 by this fable of a creuyffe / which
 wold haue chaftyfed her owne
 doughter bicause that she wente not wel ryght /
 And sayd to her in this manere / My doughter /
 hit pleaseth me not that thow goost thus back-
 ward / For euylle myght wel therof come to the /
 And thenne the doughter sayd to her moder My
 moder I shalle go ryght and forward with a good
 will but ye must goo before for to shewe to me
 the waye / But the moder coude not other wyse
 goo / than after her kynd / wherfore her doughter
 sayd unto her / My moder fyrst lerne your self
 for to goo ryght and forward / and thenne ye
 shalle teche me And therfore he that wylle teche
 other / ought to shewe good ensample / For grete
 shame is to the doctour whanne his owne coulpe
 or faulte accuseth hym

¶ The fourthe fable is of the asse / and of the
fkyne of the Lyon



One ought not to gloryfye hym self
of the goodes of other . as recyteth
this fable of an asse whiche som-
tyme fond the fkyne of a lyon /
the whiche he dyd & wered on
hym / but he coude neuer hyde his eres ther-
with / & when he was / as he supposed wel
arayed with the sayd fkyne / he ranne in to
the forest / And whanne the wyld beestes sawe
hym come / they were so ferdfull that they alle
beganne

beganne to flee / For they wend / that it had be
the lyon / And the mayster of the asse ferched and
foughte his asse in euery place al aboute And
as he had foughte longe / he thoughte that he
wold go in to the forest for to see yf his asse
were there / And as soone as he was entryd
in to the forest / he mette with his asse arayed
as before is sayd / but his mayster whiche had
foughte hym longe sawe his erys / wherfore he
knewe hym wel / and anone toke hym / and
sayd in this manere / Ha a mayster asse / arte
thow clothed with the skynne of the lyon / thow
makest the bestes to be aferd / but yf they knewe
the / as wel as I do / they shold haue no fere of
the / but I ensure the / that wel I shalle bete the
therfore / And thenne he toke fro hym the skynne
of the lyon / and sayd to hym Lyon shalt thow be
no more / but an asse shalt thow euer be / And
his mayster tooke thenne a staf / and smote hym /
soo that euer after he remembryd hym wel of
hit / And therefore he whiche auaunceth hym
self of other mennes goodes is a very foole / For
as men sayn comynly he is not wel arayed nor
wel appoynted / whiche is clothed with others
gowne / ne also it is not honeste to make large
thonges of other mennes leder

¶ The v fable is of the frogge and of the Foxe



One ought to auaunce hym self to doo that whiche he he can not doo / As hit appiereth of a frogge / whiche somtyme yssued or came oute of a dyche / the whiche presumed to haue lepte vpon a hyghe mountayne / And whanne she was vpon the mountayne / she sayd to other beestes / I am a maystresse in medecyn / and canne gyue remedy to al manere of sekenes by myn arte / and subtylyte / and shalle rendre and brynge yow vp ageyne in good helthe / wherof some byleued her / And thenne the Foxe whiche perceyued the folysshe byleue of the beestes / beganne to lawhe / and sayd to them / poure beestes / how may this fowle and venemous beest whiche is seke and pale of colour render and gyue to yow helthe / For the leche whiche wylle hele somme other / ought fyrste to hele hym self / For many one counterfayteth the leche / whiche can not a word of the scyence of medecyne / from the whiche god preferue and kepe vs

¶ The vij fable is of the two dogges



HE that taketh within hym self vayne
 glorie of that thyng / by the
 whiche he shold humble hym self
 is a very fole / as hit appereth by
 this fable / of a fader of famylle /
 whiche had two dogges / of the whiche the one
 withoute ony barkyng bote the folke / & the
 other dyd barke and bote not / And whan the
 fader of famyll perceyued the shrewdness and
 malyce of the dogge that barkyd not he henge¹⁰
 on his nek a belle / to the ende that men shold
 beware of hym / wherfore the dogge was ouer
 proud and fyers / and beganne to dyspreyse alle
 the other dogges / of the whiche one of the moost
 auntyent sayd to hym in this manere / O fole¹⁵
 beest / now perceyue I wel thy foly and grete
 wodenesse to suppose / that this belle is gyuen to
 the for thyn owne deserte and meryte / but cer-
 tainly hit is not soo / For hit is taken to the for
 thy demerytes / and by cause of thy shrewdnesse /²⁰
 and grete treason / for to shewe / that thow arte
 fals and traytour / And therefore none oughte to
 be Joyeful and gladde of that thyng / wherof
 he

he oughte to be tryft and forowful / as many foles
done / whiche make Joye of theyr vyces and
euyll dedes / for a moche fole were the theef
whiche that men ledde for to be hanged / and
that he had a cord of gold aboute his neck / yf
he shold make Joye therof / how be hit that the
corde were moche ryche and fayre

¶ The vij fable is of the camel and of Jupiter



Uery creature ought to be content of that / that god hath gyuen to hym withoute to take their herytaunce of other / As reherceth this fable Of a camel whiche som tyme complayned hym to Jupiter of that the other beestes mocqued hym / by cause that he was not of so grete beaute / as they were of / wherfore to Jupiter Instantly he prayd in suche maner as foloweth / Fayr fyre and god / I requyreand praye that thou wylt gyue to me hornes / to thende that I maye be nomore mocqued / Jupiter then beganne to lawhe / and in stede of hornes / he took fro hym his erys / and sayd / thou hast more good than hit behoueth thee to haue / And by cause that thou demaundest that / whiche thou oughtest not to haue I haue take fro the that whiche of ryght and kynd thou ouztest to haue / For none ought not to desyre more than he ought to haue / to the ende that he lese not that whiche he hath / x

¶ The eighth fable is of the two felawes



En ought not to hold felawship with
 hym / whiche is acustommed to
 begyle other / As hit appiereth
 by thys Fable / Of two felawes
 whiche somtyme held felawship
 to eche other for to goo bothe by montaynes and
 valeyes / And for to make better theyr vyage / they
 were sworne eche one to the other / that none
 of them bothe shold leue other vnto that the
 tyme of dethe shold come and departe them /¹⁰
 And as they walked in a forest they mette with
 a grete wyld bere / & bothe felaws ran sone away
 for fere / of the whiche the one clymmed / vpon
 a tree / And whan the other sawe that his felawe
 had lefte hym ^(re. le) leyd hym self on the erthe / and¹⁵
 fayned to be dede / And Incontynent the bere
 came for to ete hym / but by cause the gallaunt
 playd wel his game / the bere went forthe his
 waye and touched hym not / And thēne his felawe
 came doun fro the tree whiche sayd to hym /²⁰
 I pray thee to telle me what the bere sayd to the /
 For as me semeth he spake to the / and hath
 shewed

shewed to the grete fygne or token of loue / And
thenne his felawe sayd to hym / He taught me
many fayre secretes / but emonge alle other
thynges he sayd to me / that I shold neuer trust
hym who ones hath deceyued me

¶ The ix fable maketh mencion of the two pottes



He poure ought not to take the
 Ryche as his felawe as it ap-
 piereth by this fable of two pottes /
 of the whiche the one was coper /
 and the other of erthe / the whiche
 pottes dyd mete to gyder within a Ryuer / ¶ &
 by cause that the erthen pot wente swyfter than
 dyd the coper potte / the pot of coper sayd to
 the pot of erthe / I praye the that we may goo
 to gyder / And the erthen potte ansuerd and
 sayd to the coper pot / I wylle not go with the /
 For it shold happe to me as it happed to the
 glas and of the mortar For yf thow sholdest
 mete with me / thow sholdest breke and putte
 me in to pyeces / ¶ And therfore the poure is
 a fole that compareth and lykeneth hym self to
 the ryche and myghty / For better is to lyue in
 pouerte than to deye vylaynously and oppressyd of
 the ryche

¶ The x fable is of the lyon and of the boole



It is not alweye tyme to auenge hym
felf of his enemye / As it appiereth
by this fable of a boole / whiche
somtyme fledde before a lyon /
And as the boole wold entre with-
in a cauerne for to saue hym / a gote wente
geynste hym for to kepe and lette hym that
he shold not entre in it / to whome the boole
fayd / It is not tyme now to auenge me on the /
for the lyon that chafeth me / but the tyme shalle
come that wel I shalle fynde the / For men
ought not to doo to hym self dommage for to
be auengyd of his enemy / but oughte to loke
for tyme and place couenable for to doo hit

¶ The xi fable is of the Ape and of his sone



o fowler a thyng is to the man / than
 with his mouth to preyse hym self/
 As this fable reherceth to vs / Of
 Jupiter kynge of alle the world
 whiche made alle the beestes and
 alle the byrdes to be assembled to gyder for
 to knowe theyr bounte / and also theyr kynd /
 Emonge alle the whiche came the Ape / whiche
 presented his sone to Jupiter / sayenge thus /
 Fayre fyre and myghty god / loke and see here
 the fairest beest that euer thow createst in this
 world / And Jupiter thenne beganne to lawhe /
 and after sayd to hym / thow arte wel a fowle
 beest to preyse soo thy self / For none oughte
 to preyse hym self / but oughte to doo good
 and vertuous werkes / wherof other may preyse
 hym / for it is a shameful thyng to preyse hym
 self

¶ The xij fable is of the crane and of the peacock



Or what vertue that ony man hath /
 none oughte to preyse hym self /
 As hit apiereth by this fable / Of
 a pecok / whiche somtyme made
 a dyner to a crane / And And
 whanne they had eten and dronken ynough /
 they had grete wordes to gyder / wherfore the
 pecok sayd to the crane / Thow hast not so fayre
 a forme ne so fayre a fygyre as I haue / ne also
 fayr fethers / ne soo resplendysshynge as I haue /
 To whome the crane ansuerd / and sayd / It is
 trouthe / Neuertheles thow hast not one good / ne
 one so fayre a vertue as I haue / For how be hit
 that I haue no so fayre fethers as thow hast /
 yet can I flee better than thy self dost / For
 with thy fayre fethers thow must euer abyde
 on the erthe / and I may flee where someuer
 hit pleaseth me / And thus euerychone ought to
 haue suffysaunce and to be content of that / that
 he hath / without auanncynge or praysynge of
 hym self / and not to dyspreyse none other.

¶ The xiiij fable is of the hunter and of the tygre



Erse is the stroke of a tonge / than
 the stroke of a spere as hit ap-
 piereth by this fable / Of a hunter /
 whiche with his arowes hurted the
 wyld beestes / in suche wyse that
 none scaped fro hym / to the whiche bestes a
 tygre fyers and hard sayd in this manere / Be
 not aferd / For I shalle kepe yow well / And as
 the Tygre came in to the wode / the hunter was
 hyd within a busshe / the whiche whan he sawe
 passe the tygre before the busshe / he shote at hym
 an arowe / and hytte hym on the thye / wher-
 fore the tygre was gretely abasshed And wepynge
 and sore syghynge sayd to the other beestes / I
 wote not from whens this cometh to me / ¶ And
 whanne the foxe sawe hym soo gretely abasshed /
 al lawhyngge sayd to hym / Ha a tygre / thow arte
 so myghty and so stronge / And thenne the tygre
 sayd to hym / My strengthe auaylled me not at
 that tyme / For none may kepe hym self fro
 treason And therefore some secrete is here / whiche
 I knewe not before But notwithstandynge this I
 maye wel conceyue / that there is no wors arowe /
 ne

ne that letteth more the man / than tharowe
whiche is shotte fro the euyl tongue / For whanne
som persone profereth or sayth som wordes in a
felaufship / of sommen a of honest & good lyf /
alle the felaufship supposeth that that whiche this
euylle tongue hath sayd be trewe / be hit trewe
or not / how be it that it be but lesynge / but
notwithstandynge the good man shalle euer be
wounded of that same arowe / whiche wound
shalle be Incurable / And yf hit were a stroke of
a spere / hit myght be by the Cyrurgyen heled /
but the stroke of an euylle tongue may not be
heled / by cause that Incontynent as the word is
profered or sayd / he that hath sayd hit / is no
more mayster of hit / And for this cause the stroke
of a tongue is Incurable and withoute guaryson

¶ The xiiij fable is of the four oxen



Men oughte not to breke his feythe
ageynste his good Frend / ne to
leue his felawship / as hit appiereth
by this fable / of four oxen whiche
to gyder were in a fair medowe /

¶ And by cause that euer they were and kepte
them to gyder / none other beest durste not assaylle
them / and also the lyon dradde them moche /
the whiche lyon on a daye came to them / And
by his deceyuable wordes thoughte for to begyle
them / & to rausshe & take them the better /
maade them to be sepered eche one fro other /

¶ And whanne they were sepered / the lyon
wente / and toke one of them / And whan the
lyon wold haue strangled hym / the oxe sayd to
hym / godsep / He is a foole whiche byleueth
fals and deceyuable wordes And leueth the felaw-
ship of his good frende / For yf we had ben euer
to gyder / thow haddest not taken me / And
therfore he whiche is / and standeth wel sure /
ought to kepe hym soo that he falle not / For
to whiche is wel / meue not hym self

¶ The xv fable is of the busshie / and of the
aubyer tree



One for his beaute ought not to
despreyse some other / For som-
tyme fuche one is fayre that
soone wexeth lothely and fowle /
and to hyghe falleth vnto lowe /
as it apperyth by this fable / Of a fayr tree
whiche mocqued and scorned a lytyl busshie /
and sayd / ¶ Seest thou not / my fayre fourme
and my fayre fygure / And that of me men
and byldeth fayre edefyces as palays and castellis /
galeyes & other shippes for to saylle on the see /
And as he auaunced & preysed hym self thus /
came there a labourer with his axe for to hewe
and smyte hym to the ground / And as the
labourer smote vpon the fayre tree / the busshie
sayd / Certaynly my broder yf now thou were
as lytel / as I am / men shold not hewe ne smyte
the doune to the erthe / And therefore none
oughte to reioysse hym self of his worship /
For fuche is now in grete honour and worship /
that hereafter shalle falle in to grete vytupere
shame and dishonour

¶ The xvj fable is of the fyfsher / and of the
lytyll fyfhe



En ought not to leue that thyng
whiche is sure & certayne / for
hope to haue the vncertayn / as
to vs reherceth this fable of a
fyfsher whiche with his lyne toke
a lytyll fyfhe whiche sayd to hym / My frend I
pray the / doo to me none euylle / ne putte
me not to dethe / For now I am nought / for
to be eten / but whanne I shalle be grete / yf
thow come ageyne hyther / of me shalt thow
mowe haue grete auaylle / For thenne I shalle
goo with the good whyle / And the Fyfsher
sayd to the fyfhe . Syn I hold the now / thou
shalt not scape fro me / For grete folly hit were
to me for to seke the here another tyme / For
men ought not to lete goo that / of what they
be sure of / hopynge to haue afterwards that
that they haue not and whiche is vncertayne.

¶ The xviij fable is of phebus / of the Auarycious /
and of the enugous



One oughte to doo harme or dom-
mage to somme other for to re-
ceyue or doo his owne dommage /
As hit appereth by this fable / Of
Jupiter whiche sent phebus in to
therthe for to haue al the knowlege of the
thouzt of men ¶ This phebus thenne mette
with two men / of whiche the one was moche
enuyous / And the other ryght couetous / Phebus
demaunded of them what theyr thought was /
We thynke said they to demaunde and aske of
the grete yestes / To the which phebus ansuerd /
Now demaunde that ye wylle / For all that that
ye shalle demaunde of me / I shalle graunte hit /
And of that / that the fyrst of yow shalle aske /
the second haue the dowble parte / or as moche
more ageyne / And thenne the auarycious sayd /
I wyl that my felawe aske what he wyll fyrst
wherof the enuyous was wel content / whiche
sayd to Phebus Fayre fyre I praye the that I
maye lese one of myn eyen / to thende that
my felawe may lese al bothe his eyen / wherfor
phebus

phebus beganne to lawhe whiche departed and wente ageyne vnto Jupiter / and told hym the grete malyce of the enuyous / whiche was Joyeful and glad of the harne and dommage of an other / & how he was wel content to suffre payne for to haue adommaged fomme other

¶ The xviij fable is of the thief / and of the
child whiche wepte



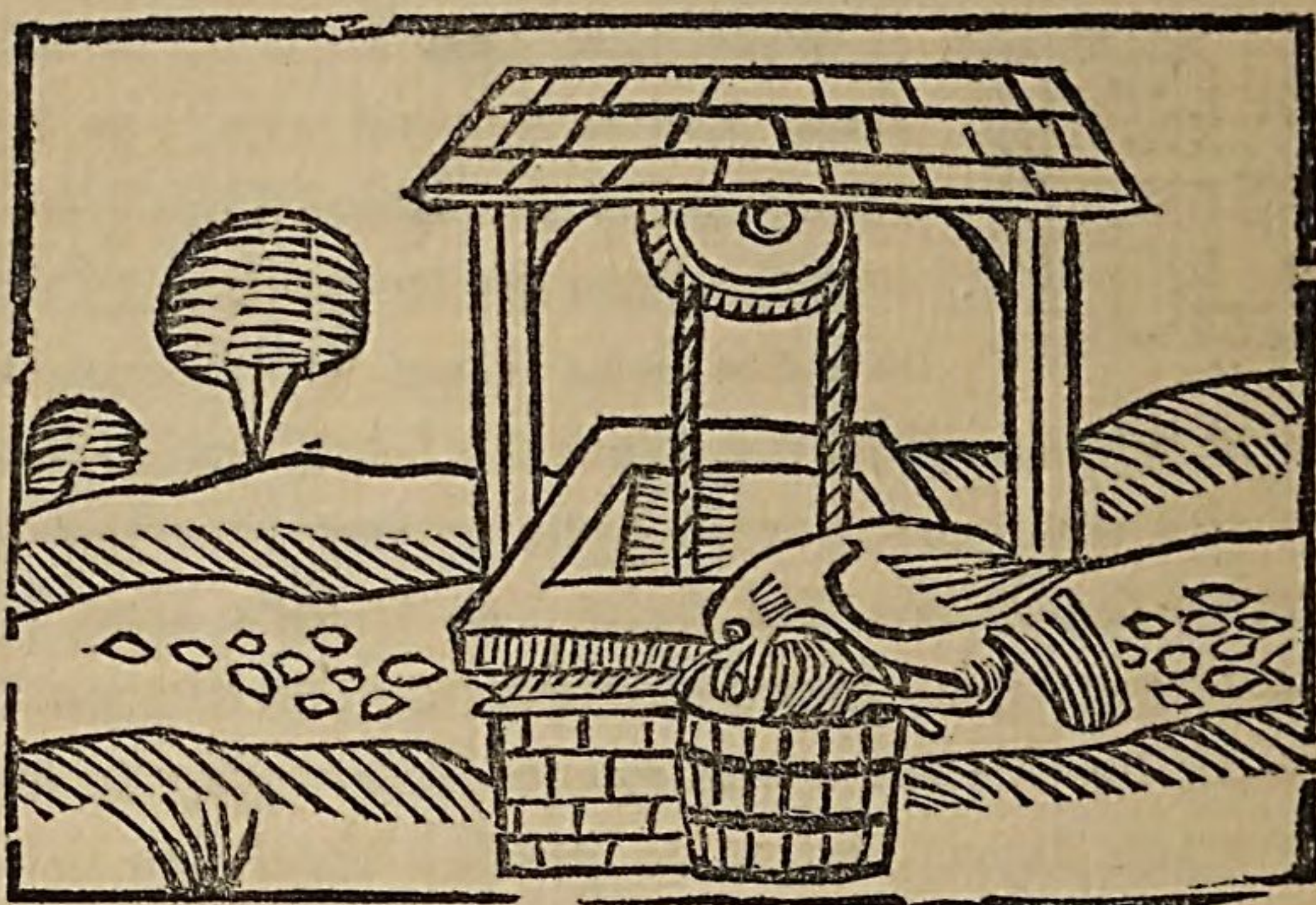
He is a fole that putteth his good in jeopardy to lese it for to gete & haue som others good / as it appereth by this fable of a thief whiche fond a child wepyng beside a welle / of whom the thief dyde aske why he wepte / & the child answerd to hym I wepe / by cause that I haue lete falle within this welle a loket of gold / & thenne the thief toke of his clothes / & sette them on the ground and wente doune in to the welle / And as he was doune the child toke his gowne & leste hym within the welle / And thus for couetyse to wyne / he lost his gowne / For suche supposen to wyne somtyme whiche lesen / And therefore none ought to wysshe that / that he hath not / to thende that he leseth not that / that he hath / For of the thyng wrongfully and euylle gotten / the thyrd heyre shalle neuer be ppsessour of hit.

¶ The xix fable is of the lyon and of the gote



He is wyse that can kepe hym self
 from the wyly and fals / as hit
 appereth by this fable / Of a lyon /
 whiche ones mette with a gote /
 whiche was vpon a montayne
 And whanne the lyon sawe her / he sayd to her
 in this manere / For to gyue to her occacion to
 come doune fro the hylle / to thende that he
 myght ete her / My suster why comest thou not
 hyder on this fayre and grene medowe for to ete
 of these fayre herbes or grasse / And the gote
 anfuerd to hym / How be hit / that thou sayst
 trouthe / Neuertheles thou sayst it not / neyther
 for my wele ne for my prouffyte / but thou sayst
 hit / by cause that thou woldest fayne ete and
 deuoure me / but I truste not in thy fayre speche /
 For many tymes I haue herd saye of my graūt
 moder / he that is wel / meue not hym self / For
 he whiche is in a place wel sure / is wel a fole to
 go fro hit / and to putte hym self in grete daunger
 and perylle

The xx fable was of the crowe whiche was a
thurst



Better is crafte and subtylyte than
force / As reherceth to vs this
fable / Of a crowe whiche vpon
a day came for to drynke oute
of a boket / and by cause that she
myght not reche to the water / she dyd fyll the
boket ful of smal stones / in soo moche that the
water came vpward / wherof she dranke thenne
at her wylle / and playfyre / And therfore hit
appiereth wel / that wytte or sapyence is a moche
fayr vertue For by sapyence or wytte / thow shalt
mowe resyste to all faultes /

¶ The xxj fable is of the bylayne and of the
yonge bole /



He whiche is of euylle and shrewd
kynd / with grete payne he may
chafty h ym self / as it appereth by
this fable / Of a vylayne / whiche
had a yonge bole / the whiche he
myght not bynd / by cause that euer he smote
with his hornes / wherfore the vylayne cutte of
his hornes / ¶ But yet whan he wold haue bound
hym / the bole casted his fute fro hym / in suche
wyse that he suffred noman to come nyghe hym /
And whan the vylayne perceyued the malyce of
the bole / he sayd to hym / I shalle chaftyse the
wel / For I shalle take the in to the bouchers
handes / And thenne was the bole wel chaftyfed /
¶ And thus ought men to doo of the euylle /
curfyd & rebelles / whiche doo no thyng but
playe with dees and cardes and to ruffule / Such
folke ought men to put in to the handes of the
boucher for to lede them to the galhows / For
better may no man chaftyse them / For with
grete payne may he be chaftyfed / whiche fleeth
alle good werkes ond alle good felauship

¶ The xxiij fable is of the biator or palmer and
of Satyre



Men ought to beware & kepe hym
felf from hym whiche bereth both
fyre and water / as reherceth to vs
this Fable Of a pylgrim / whiche
somtyme walked in the wynter /
and wente thurgh a grete forest / ¶ And by
cause that the snowe had couerd al the wayes /
he wist ne knewe not whyther he wente /
ageynste the whiche came a wodewose named
Satyre by cause he sawe hym a cold / whiche¹⁰
aproched to the pylgrym and brought hym in
to his pytte / And whan the pylgrym sawe
hym / he hadde grete drede by cause that a
wodewose is a monstre lyke to the man / as hit
appiereth by his fygure / ¶ And as the wode-¹⁵
wose or Satyre ledde the pylgrym in to his
pytte / the pylgrym dyd blowe within his handes
for to chauffe them / For he was fore cold /
And thenne the wodewose gaf to hym hote water
to drynke / ¶ And whan the pylgrym wold²⁰
haue dronken hit / he beganne to blowe in hit /
And the wodewose demaunded of hym / why
he

he dyd blowe in hit / And the pylgrym sayd to
hym / I blowe in hit / for to haue it fomewhat
more cold than hit is / The wodewose thenne
sayd to hym / Thy felaufship is not good to me /
by cause that thow bereft bothe the fyre and the
water in thy mouthe / therefore go hens fro my
pyt and neuer retorne ageyne / For the felaufship
of the man whiche hath two tongues is nought /
And the man wiche is wyse ought to flee the
felaufship of flaterers / For by flaterying & adu-
lacion many haue ben begyled and deceyued

¶ The xxiij fable is of the ore and of the rat



He lordes ought to loue theyr sub-
gettis / For he whiche is hated of
his tenaunts and subgets / is not
lord of his land / as hit appereth
by this Fable / Of an ore / whiche
somtyme was within a stable / and as the ore
on a tyme wold haue slepte fayne / a rat came /
whiche bote the ore by the thyes / And as the
ore wold haue smyten hym / he ran awaye into
his hole / And thenne the ore beganne to men-
ace the rat / And the ratte sayd to hym / I am
not aferd of the And yf thow arte grete / thy
parentes ben cause therof and not thy self / And
therefore the stronge ought not to despeyse the
feble / but ought to loue hym as the chyef or
hede ought to loue his lymmes / For he that
loueth not / oughte not to be loued / And ther-
fore the lord must loue his subgettys / yf of them
he wylle be loued

¶ The xxiiij fable is of the goos and of her lord



HE that ouer ladeth hym self / is
 euylle strayned / As this fable
 sayeth / of a man / whiche had
 a goos / that leyd euery day an
 egge of gold / The man of
 auaryce or couetousnes commaunded and bad
 to her / that euery daye she shold leye two
 egges / And she sayd to hym / Certaynly / my
 mayster I maye not / wherfore the man was
 wrothe with her / and slewe her / wherfore he
 lost that same grete good / of the whiche dede
 he was moche sorowful and wrothe / how be
 it that it was not tyme to shette the stable
 whan the horses ben losse / & gone / And he
 is not wyse whiche does such a thyng / wherof
 he shalle repente hym after ward / ne he also /
 whiche doth his owne dommage for to auenge
 hym self on somme other / For by cause that
 he supposeth to wyne al / he leseth all that
 he hath.

The xxv fable is of the ape and of his two
children



Hence that somtyme men despreysen /
may wel helpe somme other / as
hit appereth by this Fable of an
Ape / whiche had two children /
of the whiche he hated the one /
& loued the other / whiche he toke in his armes /
and with hym fled before the dogges / And
whanne the other sawe / that his moder lefte
hym behynde / he ranne and lepte on her back /
And by cause that the lytyl ape whiche the she
ape held in her armes empeched her to flee /
she lete hit falle to the erthe / And the other
whiche the moder hated held fast and was
saued / the whiche from thens forthon kyssed
and embraced his moder / And And she thenne
beganne to loue hym wherfore many tymes
it happeth / that that thyng whiche is des-
preysed / is better than that thyng whiche is
loued and preysed / For somtyme the children
whiche ben preysed and loued / done lasse good
than they whiche ben despreysed and hated

¶ The xxvj Fable is of the wynd and of
therthen pot



He that ouer moche enhaunceth hym
self / sooner than he wold / he
falleth doune / as hit appereth by
this fable / Of an erthen pot
maker whiche made a grete pot
of erthe / the whiche he dyd sette in the sonne /
by cause that more surely hit shold haue ben
dried / Ageynste the whiche came and blewe a
grete wynd / And whanne the wynd sawe the
pote he demaunded of hym / who arte thou /
And the pot ansuerd to hym / I am a pote the
best made that men can fynde / & none may
lette ne empeche me / And how sayd the
wynde / thou art yet al losse / and hast neyther
vertue ne none force / and by cause I knowe wel
thy ouer pryde / I shall breke the / and putte
the in to pyeces / to thende / that thou of thy
grete pryde mayst haue knowlege / And therfore
the feble ought to meke and humble hym self
and obeye to his lord / and not to enhaunce hym
more than he ought / to thende / he falleth not
from hye to lowe

C The xxvij fable is of the wulf and of the lambe



Of two euyls men ought euer to
eschewe and flee the worst of
bothe / yf ony of them may be
eschewed / as hit appiereth by
this fable / of a wulf / whiche
ranne after a lambe / the whiche lambe fled
into the hows where as gotes were / And whan
the wulf sawe that he myght in no wyse take
the lambe / he sayd to hym by swete wordes /
Leue thy felauship / and come with me into the
feldes / for yf thow come not / thow shalt be
take by them / and shalt be sacryfied to theyre
goddes / And the lamb answered to the wulf /
I haue leuer to shede al my blood for the loue
of the goddes / and to be sacryfied / than to be
eten and deuoured of the / And therfore he is
ful of wysedome and of prudence / who of two
grete euyls may and can escape the grettest of
bothe /

C Here synysshen the fables of Auian / And
after followen the fables of Alfonce

¶ The fyrst fable maketh mencion of the exhortacion of sapience or wysedome and of loue



Rabe of Lucanye sayd to his sone in this maner / My sone beware & loke that the formyce be not more prudent or wyser / than thy self / the whiche gadreth & assembleth to gyder in the somer all that to her nedeth to haue in the wynter / and beware that thou slepe no lenger / than the Cocke doth the whiche watcheth and waketh atte matyns tyme / and that he be not wyser and more sage than thy self / the whiche rewleth and gouerneth wel ix hennes / but hit suffyseth wel / that thou rewle and gouerne one wel / And also that the dogge be not more noble than thy self / the whiche forgeteth neuer the good whiche is done to hym / but euer he remembryth it / ¶ Item my sone suppose it not a lytyll thyng to haue a good Frend but doubte not to haue a thousand frendes / ¶ And whanne A rabe wold deye / he demaunded of his sone / My sone how many good frendes hast thou / And his sone answerd to hym / My fader I haue as I suppose an honderd frendes /
And

And the fader anfuerd to hym / beware and loke
wel that thou fuppose none to be thy frendes
withoute that thou haft affayed & proued hym /
For I haue lyued lenger than thy felf hafte /
& vnnethe I haue gete half a frend / wherfore
I meruaylle moche how thou haft gotten fo
many frendes / And thenne the fone feynge the
admyracion or wonder of his fader / demaunded
of hym / My fader . I praye yow that ye wylle
gyue to me counceyl how I fhalle mowe preue
and effaye my frend / And his fader fayd to hym
/ goo thou and kille a calf / and putte it in a fak
al bloody / and bere hit to thy fyrft frend / and
faye to hym that hit is a man whiche thou haft
flayne / And that for the loue of whiche he
loueth the / that he wylle kepe thy myfdede
fecretely and burye hit / to thende that he may
faue the / the which counceylle his fone dyd / to
whome his frend fayd / retorne ageyne to thy
hows / For yf thou haft done euylle / I wylle
not bere the payne for the / For within my hows
thou fhalt not entre / And thus one after other
he affayed alle his frendes / and euery of them
made to hym fuche an anfuere as the fyrft dyd /
wherof gretely he was abaffhed / And thenne
he retorned ageyn to his fader / and told hym /
how he had done / And his fader anfuerd to
hym / Many one ben frendes of wordes only /
but

but fewe ben in fayth or dede / but I shalle telle
to the what thou shalt doo / Goo thou to my
half frende / and bere to hym thy calf / and
thow shalt here and see what he shalle saye to
the / And whanne the sone came to the half
frende of his fader / he sayd to hym as he dyd
to the other / And whanne the half frende vn-
derstode his fayt or dede / he anone toke hym
secretely in to his hows / and ledde hym in to
a fure and obscure place / where he dyd burye
his dede calf / wherof the sone knewe the trouthe
of the half frendes loue / Thenne the sone of
Arabe torned ageyne toward his fader / and told
to hym all that his half frende had done to
hym / And thenne the fader sayd to his sone /
that the philosopher saith that the very and
trewe frend is fond in the xtreme nede / Thenne
asked the sone of his fader / sawest thou neuer
man whiche in his lyf gate a hole frend / &
his fader said to hym / I sawe neuer none / but²⁰
wel haue I herd it say / And the sone answered /
My fader I praye the that thou wylt reherce hit
to me / to thende / that by aduenture I maye
gete suche one / And the fader sayd to hym /
My sone / som tyme haue I herd of two mar-²⁵
chaunts whiche neuer had sene eche other / the
one was of Egypte / and the other was of Baldak
but they had knowleche eche of other by theyr
lettres /

lettres / whiche they fente and wrote frendly one
to the other / hit befelle thenne that the mer-
chaunt of Baldak came in to egypte for to chepe
& bye somme ware or marchaundyse / wherof
his frend was moche gladde / and wente to mete
hym and brought him benyngly in to his hows /
And after that he had chered and festyed hym
by the space of xiiij dayes / the same marchaunt
of baldak waxed and became seke / wherof his
frend was sorowfull and ful heuy / and Incon-
tynent fente for phisycyens or leches thurgh
alle egypte for to recouere his helthe / And whan
the medecyns had sene and vyfytet hym / and
his vryne also / they sayd that he had no bodyly
sekeness / but that he was rauysshed by loue / And
whan his Frend herd these wordes / he came
to hym / and sayd / My frende I pray the / that
thou wilt shewe and telle to me thy sekenes /
And his frend said to hym I praye the / that thou
wylt make to come hyder alle the wymmen
and maydens whiche ben in thy hows / for to
see / yf she whiche my herte desyreth is emonge
them / And anone his Frend made to come be-
fore hym bothe his owne doughters & seruants
Emonge the whiche was a yonge mayde / whiche
he had nourysshed for his playfyr / And whan
the pacyent or seke man sawe her / he sayd to
his frend / the same is she whiche maye be cause
of

of my lyf or my deth / the whiche his frend gaf
to hym for to be his wyf with alle fuche goodes
as he had of her / the whiche he wedded / and
retorned with her in to baldak with grete Joye /
but within a whyle after it happed and fortun-ed
fo that this marchaunt of egypte fylle in pouerte /
and for to haue fomme confolacion and comforte
he tooke his way toward baldak / and fupposed
to goo and fee his frend / And aboute one euen
he arryued to the Cyte / And for as moche that
he was not well arayed ne clothed / he had
fhame by daye lyzt to go in to the hows of his
Frend / but wente and lodged hym withynne a
Temple nyghe to a Frendes hows

¶ It happed thenne that on that fame nyght
that he laye there a man flewe another man
before the yate or entre of the fayd Temple /
wherfore the neyghbours were fore troubled /
And thenne all the peple moeued therof came
in to the Temple / wherin they fond no body
fauf only thegypcyen / the whiche they toke /
and lyke a murderer Interroged hym why he
had flayne that man whiche lay dede before the
portall or gate of the temple / He thenne feynge
his Infortune and pouerte / confessed / that he
had kyllled hym / For by caufe of his euyll fortune
he wold rather deye than lyue ony more / wher-
fore he was had before the Juge / and was con-
dempned

dempned to be hanged / And whan men ledde
 hym toward the galhows / his frend sawe and
 knewe hym / and beganne to wepe fore / remem-
 bryng the bienfayttes whiche he had done to
 hym / wherfore he went to the Justyce and sayd /
 My lordes this man dyd not the homycyde / For
 hit was my self that dyd hit / And therfore ye
 shold dogrete synne yf ye dyd put this Innocent and
 gyltles to dethe / And anone he was take for be
 had vnto the galhows / And thenne the Egypcyen
 sayd / My lordes / he dyd hit not / And therfore
 euylle shold ye doo to put him to dethe / And as
 the two frendes wold haue been hanged eche
 one for other / he whiche had done the homycyde
 came and knewe and confessyd there his synne /
 and adressed hym self before the Justyce and
 sayd / My lordes / none of them bothe hath done
 the dede / And therfore punyssh the not ye these
 Innocents / For I allone ought to bere the payne /
 whereof all the Justyse was gretely meruaylled /
 And for the doubte whiche therin was grete / the
 Justyce toke them al thre / & ledde them before
 the kyng / And when they had reherced to the
 kynge all the maner / after enquest theupon
 made / and he knewe the very trouthe of hit /
 graunted his grace to the murderer / and so alle
 thre were delyuerd / And the frend brought his
 frend in to hys hows / and receyued hym Joyously /
 and

and after he gaf to hym bothe gold and fyluer /
And the egypcyen torned ageyne in to his hows /
And whan the fader had fayd and reherced all
this to his fone / his fone fayd to hym / My fader
I knowe now wel that he whiche may gete a
good frende is wel happy / And with grete labour
as I fuppose I fhall gete fuche one. x

303
**¶ The second fable is of the commysſion of pecuny
 or money**



Spaynard arrayued ſomtyme in to
 the lande of egipte and by cauſe
 that he doubted to be robbed
 within the deſertys of Arabe / he
 purpoſed and bethought in hym
 ſelf that it were wyſely done to take his money
 to ſomme trewe man for to kepe hit vnto his re-
 torne ageyne / And by cauſe that he herd ſomme
 ſaye / that within the Cyte was a trewe man / he
 anone wente to hym / and toke to hym his ſyluer /
 for to kepe hit / And whan he had done his
 vyage he came ageyne to hym / and demaunded
 of hym his ſyluer / whiche anſuerd to hym in this
 manere / My frend / I ne wote who thou arte /
 for I ſawe the neuer that I wote of / And yf
 thou ſayeſt or ſpekeſt ony more wordes / I ſhalle
 make the to be wel bete / Thenne was the
 ſpaynard ſorowful and wroth / and therof he
 wold haue made a playnte to his neyghbours /
 as he dyde / & the neyghbours ſayd to hym /
 Certaynly / we be wel abaſhed of that / that
 ye telle to vs / for he is emonge vs alle reputed
 and

and holden for a good man and trewe / And
therfore retorne ageyne to hym / and by fwete
wordes telle hym that he wyl rendre to the thy
good ageyne / the whiche thyng he dyd / and
the old man anfuerd to hym more sharply and
wonderly than he had done before / wherof the
spaynard was wonderly wrothe / And as he de-
parted oute of the old mans hows / he mette with
an old woman / the whiche demaunded of hym /
wherfore he was soo troubled and heuy / And
after that he had told to her the cause why /
thold woman sayd to hym / make good chere /
For yf hit is so as thou sayst / I shalle counceylle
the how thou shalt recouere thy syluer / And
thenne he demaūded of her / how hit myght be
done / And she sayd to hym bryng hyther to me
a man of thy country whome thou trustest / and
doo to be made four fayre chestes / and fylle
them alle with stons / and by thy felawes thou
shalt make them to be borne / in to his hows /
and to hym they shalle say / that the marchaūts
of spayne send them to hym for to kepe surely /
And whan the chestes shalle be within his hows /
thou shalt go and demāde of hym thy syluer /
whiche thyng he dyd / And as the sayd chestes
were borne within his hows / the spaynard
wente with them / that bare them / the whiche
straungers sayd to the old mā My lord / these
four

four chestes ben al ful of gold / of fyluer and of
precious stons / whiche we brynge to yow / as to
the trewest man and feythful that we knowe for
to kepe them furely by cause that we fere and
doubte the theues / whiche ben within the desert /
After the whiche wordes sayd / came he / whiche
the old woman had counceyllled / and demaunded
of hym his fyluer And by that cause the old man
doubted / that the spanynard wold haue des-
preyfed hym / he sayd thus to hym / Thow arte
Welcome / I merueylled how thow taryest soo
longe for to come / And Incontynent he restored
to hym his fyluer / And thus by the counceylle
of the woman whiche he gretely thanked / he
had his good ageyn / and retourned ageyne in to
his countrey /

The thyrd fable speketh of a subtile Inuencion of a sentence gguen upon a derke and obscure cause.

304.
dark



It befelle somtyme that a good man labourer wente fro lyf to deth / the whiche labourer lefte nothyng to his sone / but only a hows / the whiche sone lyued by the laboure of his handes pourely / This yong man had a neyghbour whiche was made ryche whiche demaūded of the sayd yong man yf he wold felle his hows / but he wold not felle it / by cause that it was come to hym by inherytaūce and by patrymony wherfore the ryche man his neyghbour conuersyd & was ful oft with hym for to deceyue hym / but the yong man fled his company as moche as he myght / & whan the ryche man perceyued that the yong man fled from hym / he bethought hym self of a grete decepcion & falskede / & demaūded of the poure yong man that he wold hyre to hym a parte of his hows for to delue & make a celer / the whiche he shold hold of hym payeng to hym yerely rent / & the poure yong man hyred it to hym / & whan
the

the celer was made / the ryche man did do bryng
therin x tonnes of oylle of the which the v were
ful of of oylle / & the the other v were but half
full / & dyd do make a grete pytte in the erthe /
& dyd do put the fyue tonnes whiche were half
ful in hit / & the other fyue aboue them / And
thenne he shytte the dore of the celer / and de-
lyuerd the keye to the poure yonge man / and
prayd hym frawdelyntly to kepe wel his oylle /
but the poure yonge man knewe not the malyce
and falskede of his neyghboure / wherfore he
was contente to kepe the keye / And within a
whyle after as the oylle became dere / the ryche
came to the poure / and asked hym his good / and
the yong man toke to hym the keye / this Ryche
man thenne fold his oylle to the marchaunts /
and waraunted eche tonne al ful / And when the
marchaunts mesured theyr oylle / they fond but
fyue of the x tonnes full / wherof the ryche man
demaunded of the poure yonge man restitu-
cion / and for to haue his hows he maade hym to
come before the Juge / ¶ And whanne the poure
man was before the Juge / he demaunded terme
and space for to answere / For hym thought and
femed that he had kepte well his oylle / and the
Juge gaf and graūted to hym day of aduys / &
thēne he went to a philosophre which was pro-
curatour of the poure peple / & prayd hym for
charyte /

charyte/ that he wold gyue to hym good couceylle
of his grete nede / & he reherced and told to hym
al his cause & fwore vpon the holy euangely that
he toke none of the ryche mans oylle / And
thenne the philosopher anfuerd to hym in this
manere / My sone / haue no fere / for the trouthe
may not faylle / And the next morowe after / the
philosopher wente with the poure man in to
Jugement / the whiche philosopher was consti-
tued by the kynge for to gyue the Just sentence
of hit / And after that the cause had be wel
deffended and pleted by bothe partyes / the
philosophre sayd / the fame ryche man is of good
renommee / and I suppose not that he demaunded
more than he shoud haue / And also I byleue
not that this poure may be maculed ne gylty of
the blame / which he putteth on hym / but not-
withstondynge for to knowe the trouthe of hit / I
ordeyne and gyue sentence / that the oylle pure
and clene of the v tonnes whiche are ful to be
mesured / and also the lye therof / And after that
the pure and clene oylle of the fyue which been
but half ful to be also measured / and with the lye
thereof / and that men loke yf the lye of the fyue
Tonnes half ful is egal and lyke to the lye of the
fyue Tonnes / whiche ben fulle / And yf hit be
not soo / that as moche lye be fond within the
vessels whiche ben but half full as in the other /
he

he shalle thenne be suffysauntly & ryghteously
proued / that none oyle hath be taken oute of
them / but yf ther be fond as moche lye in the
one as in the other / the poure shall be con-
dempned / and of this sentence the poure was
contente / & the trouthe was knowen / wherfore
the poure man went quyte / and the ryche was
condempned / For his grete malyce and falsheed
was knowen and manifested / For there is no
fynne or myfdede done / but that ones it shalle be
known and manifested. /

The fourthe fable maketh mencion of the sentence g^uen bp the pecuny or money whiche was found.



Ryche man somtyme wente by a Cyte / And as he walked fro one syde to that other / fylle fro hym a grete purse / wherin were a thousand Crownes / the whiche a poure man fond / and toke them for to kepe to his wyf / wherof she was ful gladde / and sayd / thanked be god of al the goodes whiche he sendeth to vs / yf he sendeth now this grete somme kepe we hit wel / And on the next morne after folowyng / the Ryche man made to be cryed thurgh the cyte / that who someuer had fond a thowfand Crownes in a purse / he shold restitue / and brynge them to hym ageyne / and that he shold haue for his reward an honderd of them / And after that the poure man had herd this crye / he ranne Incontynent to his wyf / & sayd to her / My wyf / that / that we haue fond must be rendred or yolden ageyne / For hit is better to haue a C crownes withoute synne than a thowfand with synne & wrongfully / And how
be

the end
2 p 258 v 6
 be hit that the woman wold haue refyfted /
 Neuertheles in thende ſhe was content / And thus
 the poure man reſtored the thowſand crownes to
 the Rychē / and demaunded of hym the honderd
 crownes / And the ryche full of frawde or falſ-
 hede ſayd to the poure / thou rendreſt not to
 me al my gold / whiche thou fondeſt / For of
 hit I lack four honderd pyeces of gold And
lacune
 whanne thou ſhalt rendre and brynge to me
 ageyn the ſayd four hondred pyeces of gold /
 thou ſhalt haue of me the C crownes too whiche
 I promyſed to the / And thenne the poure anſuerd
 to hym / I haue take and brought to the al that
 I haue found / wherfore they fylle in a grete
 dyfferent or ſtryf / in ſo moche that the cauſe
 came before the kyng / to be decyded and pletyd /
 of the whiche the kyng made to be callyd before
 hym a grete philoſopher whiche was procuratour
 of the poures / And whanne the cauſe was wel
 diſputed / the philoſopher moued with pyte /
 called to hym the poure man / and to hym ſeyd
 in this maner / Come hyther my frend / by thy
 feythe haſt thou reſtored alle that good whiche
 thou fondeſt in the purſe / and the poure anſuerd
 to hym / ye fyre by my feythe / And thenne the
 philoſophre ſayd before thaffiſtantes / Syth this
 ryche man is trewe and feythfull / and that hit
 is not to byleue / that he ſhould demaunde more
 than

than he ought to doo / he ought to be byleued /
And as to the other parte men muste byleue that
this poure man is of good renomme and known
for a trewe man wherfore the philosopher sayd
to the kynge / Syre I gyue by my sentence / that
thow take these thousand crownes / and that an
C thow take of them / the whiche honderd thow
shalt delyuere to this poure man whiche fond
them / And after whan he that hath lost them
shall come / thow restore them to hym / And yf
it happeth that another persone fynde the thousand
& four C crownes / they shal be rendryd
and taken ageyne to the same good man whiche
is here present whiche sayth that he hath lost
them / the whiche sentence was moche agreable
and plesant to al the companye / And when the
ryche man sawe that he was deceyued / he de-
maunded myferycorde and grace of the kynge
sayenge in this manere / Syre this poure man
that hath fond my purse / trewely he hath re-
stored it to me all that I ouȝt to haue / but
certaynly I wold haue deceyued hym / wherfore
I praye the that thou wylt haue pyte and myfery-
corde on me And thenne the kynge had myfery-
corde on hym / And the poure man was wel
contented and payd / and al the malyce of the
ryche man was known and manifested

¶ The v fable is of the feythe of the thre felawes.



Q Fte it happeth that the euylliche is procured to other cometh to hym whiche procureth it / as hit apperyth by the felawes / of the whiche tweyn were burgeys / & the thyrd a labourer / the whiche assembled them to gydre for to go to the holy sepulcre / This thre felawes made so grete prouysyon of flour for to make theyr pylgremage / in suche wyse / that it was all chauffed / and consumed / excepte only for to make one loef only / And whan the Burgeis sawe thende of theyre floure they sayd to gyder / yf we fynde not the maner and cautele for to begyle this vylayn / by cause that he is a rygt grete gallaunt / we shalle deye for hongre / wherfore we must fynde the maner and facyone that we may haue the loof whiche shall be maad of alle oure flour / And therfore they concluded to gyder and sayd / whanne the loof shalle be putte within the ouen we shalle go and lye vs for to slepe / and he that shalle dreame best / the loof shall

together

provision
of meal

shall be his / And by cause that we bothe ben
subtyl and wyse / he shalle not mowe dreame
as wel as we shalle / wherof the loof be ours /
wherof alle they thre were wel content / and al
byganne to slepe /

¶ But whanne the labourer or vylayne knewe
and perceyued all theyre fallace / and sawe that
his two felawes were a slepe / he wente and
drew the loof oute of the ouen and ete hit /
¶ And after he feyned to be a slepe / and thene¹⁰
one of the burgeys rose vp / and sayd to hys felawes /
I haue dreamed a wonder dreame / For two Angels
haue taken & borne me with grete Joye before
the dyuyn mageste / And the other burgeys his
felawe awoke and sayd / Thy dreame is merueyl-¹⁵
lous and wonderfull / but I suppose that the myn
is fayrer / than thyn is / For I haue dreamed that
two Angels drew me on hard ground for to
lede me in to helle / And after they dyd awake
the vylayne whiche as dredeful sayd / who is²⁰
there / and they answered / we be thy felawes /
And he sayd to them / how be ye soo soone
retourned / And they answered to hym / how
retorned / we departed not yet fro hens / And he
sayd to them by my feythe / I haue dreamed that²⁵
the Angels had led one of yow in to paradys or
heuen / and the other in to helle / wherfor I
supposed / that ye shold neuer have comen
ageyne /

ageyne / And therfore I aroos me fro sleep / and
by cause I was hongry / I wente and drewe oute
of the ouen the loef and ete hit / For ofte hit
happeth that he whiche supposeth to begyle
somme other / is hym self begyled.

¶ The bj fable is of the labourer and of the
nyghtyngale



Somtyme there was a labourer /
whiche had a gardeyn wel play-
faunt and moche delycious / in to
the whiche he ofte wente for to
take his desporte and playfure /
And on a day at euen when he was wery and
had trauaylled fore / for to take his recreacion he
entryd in to his gardyn and sette himself doune
vnder a tree / where as he herd the songe of a
nyghtyngale / And for the grete plesyre and Joye
whiche he took therof / he sought and at the last
fond the meanes for to take the nyghtyngale / to
thende / that yet gretter joye and playfaunce he
myght haue of hit / And whan the nyghtyn-
gale was take / he demaunded of the labourer /
wherfore hast thou take so grete payne for to
take me / For wel thou knowest that of me
thou mayst not haue grete prouffyte / And the
vylayne ansuerd thus to the nyghtyngale / For to
here the songe of the I haue taken the / And the
nyghtyngale ansuerd Certaynly in vayne thou
hast payned and laboured / For / for no good I
wylle

wylle fyngge whyle that I am in pryson / And
thenne the labourer or vylayne anfuerd / yf thou
fyngest not wel / I shalle ete the / And thenne
the nyghtyngale sayd to hym / yf thou putte me
within a potte for to be soden / lytyl mete shalt
thou thenne make of my body / and yf thou setteſt
me for to be roſted / leſſe mete ſhalle be thenne
made of me / And therfor neyther boylled ne
roſted ſhalle not be thy grete bely fylled of me /
but yf thou lete me flee / hit ſhall be to the a
grete good prouffyte / For thre doctrynes I ſhall
teche the whiche thou ſhalt loue better than
thre fat kyne / and thene the labourer lete the
nyghtyngale flee / And whan he was oute of his
handes / and that he was vpon a tree / he ſayd to
the vylayne in this maner / My Frend I haue
promyſed to the / that I ſhall gyue to the thre
doctrynes / wherof the fyrſt is this that thou
byleue no thyng whiche is Impoſſyble / The
ſecond is that thou kepe wel that thyn is / And
the thyrde is / that thou take no ſorowe of the
thyng loſt whiche may not be recouererd / And
ſoone after the nyghtyngale beganne to fygne /
& in his ſonge ſayd thus / bleſſyd be god / whiche
hath delyuerd me oute of the handes of this
vylayne or chorle / whiche hath not knowen /
ſene / ne touched the precious dyamond whiche
I haue within my bely / For yf he had foude
hit /

hit / he had be moche ryche / And fro his handes
I had not fcaped / And thenne the vylayne whiche
herd this fonge / beganne to complayne and to
make grete forowe . and after fayd I am wel
vnhappy / that haue loft fo fayre a trefour /
whiche I had wonne / and now I haue loft hit /
And the nyghtyngale feyd thenne to the chorle /
Now knowe I wel that thou arte a fool / For
thou takest forowe of that wherof thou sholdest
haue none / and fone thou haft forgotten my
doctryne / by cause that thou wenest that within
my bely shold be a precious ftone more of weyght
than I am / And I told and taught to the / that
thou sholdest neuer byleue that thyng / which
is Impoffyble / And yf that ftone was thyn / why
haft thou loft hit / And yf thou haft loft hit and
mayft not recouere hit / why takest thou forowe
for hit / And therefore hit is foly to chaftyse or to teche a fole / whiche neuer byleueth the lernynge
and doctryne whiche is gyuen to hym. 11.

¶ The vij fable is of a Rethorycian and of a
crouk backed /



Philosopher sayd ones to his sone /
that whan he were falle by fortune
in to somme dommage or perylle /
the sooner that he myght he shold
delyuere hym of hit / to thende /
that afterward he shold no more be vexed ne
greued of hit / As hit appiereth by this fable of a
rethoryque man or fayr speker / whiche ones
demaunded of a kynge / that of alle them whiche
shold entre in to the cyte / hauynge somme faulte
of . kynde on theyr bodyes / as crouked or coun-
terfayted / he myght haue and take of them at
thentre of the yate a peny / the whiche demaunde
the kynge graunted to hym / and made his lettres
to be sealed and wretton vnder his sygnet / And
thus he kepte hym styll at the yate / And of
euery lame / scabbed / & of alle fuche that had
ony counterfaytour on theyr bodyes / he tooke a
peny / ¶ It happed thene on a day that a
croukbacked and counterfayted man wold haue
entryd within the Cyte withoute gyuyng of ony
peny / and bethought hym self / that he shold
take

take and put on hym a fayre mantel / and thus
 arayed came to the yate / ¶ And thenne whan
 the porter byheld hym / he perceyued that he
 was goglyed / and fayd to hym pay me of my
 dewte / And the goglyed wold paye nought /
 wherfore he toke from hym his mantel / And
 thenne he sawe that he was crowkbacked and
 fayd to hym / thow woldest not to fore paye a
 peny / but now thou shalte paye tweyne / ¶ And
 whyle that they stryued to gyder / the hat and
 the bonet felle from his hede to the erthe / And
 the porter whiche sawe his scabbed hede / fayd to
 hym / Now shalt thou paye to me thre pens /
 and thenne the porter yet ageyne setted his
 handes on hym / and felte / that his body was al
 scabbed / And as they were thus wraftlynge to
 gyder / the crowkbacked felle to the ground /
 and hurted hym self fore on the legge / And the
 porter fayd thenne to hym / Now shalt thou
 paye v pens / For thy body is al counterfayted /
 wherfore thou shalt leue here thy mantele / And
 yf thou haddeft payd a peny / thou haddeft gone
 on thy waye free and quyte / wherfore he is wyse
 that payeth that / that he oweth of ryght / to
 thende that therof come not to hym gretter
 dommage

¶ The egypt fable is of the discyple / and of
the sheep /



Discyple was somtyme / whiche
toke his playfyr to reherce and
telle many fables / the whiche
prayd to his mayster / that he
wold reherce vnto hym a long
fable / To whome the mayster anfuerd / kepe and
beware wel that hit hadde not to vs / as it happed
to a kyng and to his fabulatour / And the discyple
anfuerd / My mayster I pray the to telle to me
how it befelle / And thenne the mayster sayd to
his descyple / ¶ Somtyme was a kyng whiche
hadde a fabulatour / the whiche reherced to
hym at euery tyme / that he wold slepe fyue
fables for to reioyshe the kyng / and for to
make hym falle in to a slepe / It befelle thenne
on a daye / that the kyng was moche sorowful
and so heuy / that he coude in no wyse falle a
slepe / And after that the sayd fabulatour had
told and reherced his fyue fables / the kyng
desyred to here more / And thenne the sayd
fabulatour recyted vnto hym thre fables wel
shorte / And the kyng thenne sayd to hym / I
wold

sign
wold fayne here one wel longe / And thenne
shalle I leue wel the slepe / The fabulatur
thenne reherced vnto hym fuche a fable / Of a
ryche man whiche wente to the market or feyre *foire*
for to bye sheep / the which man bought a
thowfand sheep / And as he was retornynge fro
the feyre / he cam vnto a Ryuer / and by cause
of the grete waiues of the water he coude not
passe ouer the brydge / Neuertheles he wente
soo longe to and fro on the Ryuage of the sayd
Ryuier / that at the last he fonde a narowe way /
vpon the whiche myght passe scant ynough thre /
sheep attones / And thus he passed and had them
ouer one after another / And hyderto reherced
of this fable / the fabulatur felle on slepe / And
anon after the kynge awoke the fabulatur / and
sayd to hym in this manere / I pray the that
thow wylt make an ende of thy fable / And the
fabulatur anfuerd to hym in this manere Syre
this Ryuer is ryght grete / and the ship is lytyl /
wherfore late the marzhaunt doo pass ouer his
sheep / And after I shalle make an ende of my
fable / And thenne was the kynge wel appeased
and pacyfied / ¶ And therfore be thow content
of that I haue reherced vnto the / For there is
folke superstycious or capaxe / that they may not
be contented with fewe wordes //

¶ The ix fable is of the wulf / of the labourer /
of the foxe / & of the chese



Somtyme was a labourer ^{hy}wgiche vn-
nethe myght gouerne and lede his
oxen by cause that they smote with
theyr feet / wherfore the labourer
sayd to them / I pray to god that
the wulf may ete yow / the whiche wordes the
wulf herd / wherfore he hyd hym self nyghe
them vnto the nyght / And thenne came for to
ete them / ¶ And whanne the nyght was come /
the labourer vnbonde his oxen / and lete them¹⁰
goo to his hows / ¶ And thenne whanne the
wulf sawe them comynge homeward / he sayd /
O thow labourer many tymes on this day thow
dydest gyue to me thyn oxen / and therfore hold
thy promesse to me / ¶ And the labourer sayd¹⁵
to the wulf / I promysed to the nought at al / in
the presence of whome I am oblyged or bound /
I swore not neyther to paye the / and the wulf
ansuerd / I shalle not leue the goo / withoute
that thow hold to me that / that thow promysed²⁰
and gauest to me / ¶ And as they had soo grete
stryf and descencion to gyder / they remytted
the

the cause to be discuted or pleted before the
 Juge / And as they were sechynge a Juge / they
 mette with the foxe / to whome they recounted
 or told alle theyr dyfferent and stryf / ¶ Thenne
 sayd the Foxe vnto them / I shalle accorde yow⁵
 bothe wel / and I shalle gyue on your cause or
 plee a good sentence / But I must speke with
 eche one of yow bothe a part or allone / And
 they were content / ¶ And the Foxe wente and
 told to the labourer / thow shalt gyue to me a¹⁰
 good henne / And another to my wyf / And I
 shalle hit soo make / that thow with alle thyn
 oxen shalt frely goo vnto thy hows / wherof the
 labourer was wel content / ¶ And after the
 foxe wente and sayd to the wulf / I haue wel¹⁵
 laboured and wrought for the / For the labourer
 shall gyue to the therfore a grete chese / and lete
 hym goo home wyth his oxen / And the wulf
 was wel content /

¶ And after the Foxe sayd to the wulf / come²⁰
 thow wyth me / and I shalle lede the / where
 as the chese is / ¶ And thenne he ledde hym
 to and fro / here and there vnto the tyme that
 the mone shyned ful bryghtly / And that they
 came to a welle / vpon the whiche the Foxe²⁵
 lepte / and shewed to the wulf the shadowe of the
 mone / whiche reluced in the well / & sayd to
 hym / loke now godsep / how that chese is fayre /
 grete

grete and brode / hye the now and goo doune
& after take that chese / ¶ And the wulf sayd
to the Foxe / thow must be the fyrste of vs
bothe / that shalle goo doune / And yf thow
mayst not brynge hit with the / by cause of his
gretenesse / I shalle thenne goo doune for to
helpe the / And the Foxe was content / by cause
two bokettys were there / of whiche as the one
came vpward / the other wente downward / and
the foxe entryd in to one of the fame bokettis /
and wente doune in to the Welle / And whanne
he was doune / he sayd to the wulf / godsep come
hyther and helpe me / For the chese is so moche
and soo grete that I maye not bere hit vp / and
thenne the wulf was aferd of that the Foxe shold
ete hit / entryd wythynne the other boket / and
as faste as he wente downward / the Foxe came
vpward / and whan the wulf sawe the Foxe
comynge vpward / he sayd to hym / My godsep
ye goo hens / thow sayst trewe sayd the Fox /
For thus hit is of the world / For when one
cometh doune / the other goth vpward / and thus
the foxe wente away / and lefte the wulf within
the welle / And thus the wulf lost bothe the oxen
and the chese / wherfore hit is not good to leue that
whiche is sure and certayne / For to take that
whiche is vncertayne / For many one ben therof
deceyued by the falsheed and decepcion of the
Aduocate and of the Juges

¶ The x fable is of the husband and of the
moder & of hys wyf



Omtyme was a merchaunt whiche
maryed hym to a yonge woman /
the whiche had yet her moder on
lyue / It happed that this Mar-
chaunt wold ones haue gone som-
where in to ferre country for to by some ware or
marchaundyse / And as he was goynge / he betoke
his wyf to her moder for to kepe and rewle
her honestly tyll he come ageyne / ¶ His wyf
thenne . by the owne consentynge and wylle of
her moder / enamoured her self of a ryght gen-
tyl / fayre and yong man whiche fournyshed to
thappoyntement / And ones as they thre made
good chere the husband came ageyne fro the
feyre and knocked at the dore of the hows /
wherfore they were wel abasshed / Thenne sayd
the old moder thus to them / haue no fere / but
doo as I shalle telle to yow / and care yow not /
And thenne she sayd to the yonge man / hold
this sward / and goo thow to the yate / and be-
ware thy self that thow saye no word to hym /
but lete me doo / And as the husband wold haue
entyrd

upaid

entryd his hows / and that he sawe the yong
man holdynge a naked fwerd in his handes / he
was gretely aferd / And thenne the old woman
fayd to hym / *x* My sone thow arte ryght welcome /
be not aferd of this man / For thre men ranne
ryght now after hym for to haue slayne hym /
and by auenture he fond the yate open / and this
is the cause why he came here for to saue his
lyf / *x* And thenne the husbond said to them / ye
haue done wel / And I can yow grete thanke / *x*¹⁰
And thus the yonge ameraus wente his waye
surely by the subtylyte of the moder / of his wyf /
to the whiche truste thy self not / and thow shalt
doo as sage and wyse /

¶ The xj fable is of an old harlotte or bawde



Noble man was somtyme / whiche
 had a wyf moche chaste and was
 wonder fayr / This noble man
 wold haue go on pylgrimage to
 Rome / and lefte his wyf at home /
 by cause that he knewe her for a chaste and a
 good woman / ¶ It happed on a daye as she
 wente in to the toun A fayre yonge man was
 espyred of her loue / and took on hym hardynes /
 and requyred her of loue / and promysed to her
 many grete yestes / But she whiche was good had
 leuer deye than to consente her therto / wherfore
 the yonge man deyde almooste for sorowe /
 to the whiche felawe came an old woman / whiche
 demaunded of hym the cause of his sekenesse /
 And the yonge man manifested or descouered
 vnto her alle his courage and herte / askynge help
 and councyllle of her / And the old woman
 wyly and malycious sayd to hym / Be thow
 gladde and Joyous / and take good courage / For
 wel I shalle doo / and brynge aboute thy faytte /
 in soo moche thow shalt haue thy wyll fulfilled /
 And after thys the old bawde wente to her hows /
 and

gifts that one

fair

and maade a lytyl catte which she hadde at
 homme to faste thre dayes one after another /
 And after she took somme breed with a grete
 dele or quantite of mostard vpon hit / and gaf hit
 to thys yonge Catte for to ete hit / ¶ And⁵
 whanne the Catte smelled hit / she beganne to
 wepe and crye / ¶ And the old woman or
 Bawde wente vnto the hows of the sayd yonge
 woman / and bare her lytyl Catte with her / the
 whiche yonge and good woman receyued and¹⁰
 welcomed her moch honestly / by cause that alle
 the world held her for a holy woman / ¶ And
 as they were talkynge to gyder / the yong woman
 hadde pyte of the catte whiche wepte / And
 demaunded of the old woman / what the cat¹⁵
 eyled / And the old woman sayd to her / Ha a
 my fayr doughter & my fayre Frend / renewe
 not my sorowe / And sayinge these wordes she
 beganne to wepe / and sayd / My frend for no²⁰
 good I wyl tell the cause why my catte wepeth /
 And thenn / the yonge woman sayd to her / My
 good Moder I praye yow that ye wyll telle me
 the cause & wherfor your catte wepeth / And
 thenne the old woman sayd to her / My Frend
 I wyll wel / yf thow wilt swere that thou shalt²⁵
 neuer reherce it to no body / to the whiche pro-
 messe the good and trewe yonge woman accorded
 her self / supposyng / that hit had ben all good
 and

and fayd / I wyll wel / And thenne the old woman fayd to her in this manere / My frend this fame catte whiche thou feest yonder was my daughter / the whiche was wonder fayre gracious and chaste / whiche a yonge man loued moche / and was so moche espyred of her loue / that by cause that she reffused hym / he deyde for her loue / wherfore the goddes hauyng pyte on hym / haue torned my daughter in to this catte / And the yonge woman whiche supposed that the old woman had fayd trouthe fayd to her in this manere / *x* Allas my fayr moder / I ne wote what I shalle doo / For fuche a caas myght wel happe to me / For in this Towne is a yonge man / whiche deyeth almost for the loue of me / But *15* for loue of my husband / to whome I oughte to kepe chastyte / I haue not wylle graunte hym / *x* Neuertheles I shall doo that / that thou shalt counceylle to me / And thenne the old woman fayd to her / My frend haue thou pyte on hym *20* as soone as thou mayst / soo that hit befalle not to the lyke as it dyd to my doughter / *x*

¶ The yonge woman thenne answerd to her / and fayd / yf he requyre me ony more / I shalle accorde me with hym / And yf he requyre me no *25* more / yet shalle I profere me to hym / ¶ And to thende / that I offende not the goddes / I shalle doo and accomplyfhe hit / as soone as I maye /

¶ The

leue

¶ The old woman thene took leue of her / and
wente forthwith to the yong man / And to hym
she reherced and told all these tydynges / wherof
hys herte was fylled with Joye / the whiche
anone wente toward the yonge woman / and
with her he fulfylled his wylle / ¶ And thus ye
maye knowe the euyls / whiche ben done by
bawdes and old harlottes / that wold to god /
that they were al brente *11. brente.*

The xij fable is of a blynd man and of
his wyf /



Here was somtyme a blynd man
whiche had a fayre wyf / of the
whiche he was moche Jalous / He
kepte her so that she myght not
goo nowher / For ewer he had her
by the hand / And after that she was enamoured
of a gentil felawe / they coude not fynde the
maner ne no place for to fulfyll theyr wyll / but
notwithstandyng the woman whiche was subtile
and Ingenyous counceylled to her frende that he
shold come in to her hows / and that he shold
entre in the gardyn and that there he shold
clymme vpon a pere tree / And he did as she
told hym / and when they had made theyr enter-
pryse / the woman came ageyne in to the hows /
and sayd to her husbond / My frend I praye yow
that ye wylle go in to our gardyn for to despose
us a lytel whyle there / of the whiche prayer the
blynd man was wel content / and sayd to his
wyf / wel my good frend I will wel / lete vs go
thyder / And as they were vnder the pere tree /
she sayd to her husbond / My frende I praye the
to

to lete me goo vpon the pere tre / And I shalle
 gader for vs bothe some fayre peres / wel my
 frend sayd the blynd man / I wylle wel & graūt
 therto / And when she was vpon the tree / the
 yong man begann to shake the pere tree at
 one syde / and the yonge woman at the other
 syde / And And as the blynd man herd thus hard
 shake the pere tree / And the noyse whiche they
 made / he sayd to them / Ha a euyelle woman /
 how be it that I see hit not / Neuertheles I fele¹⁰
 and vnderstande hit well / But I praye to the
 goddes / that they vouchesauf to sende me my
 fyght ageyne / And as soone as he had made his
 prayer Jupiter rendryd to hym his fyght ageyn
 ¶ And whanne he sawe that pagent vpon the¹⁵
 pere tree / he sayd to his wyf Ha vnhappy
 woman / I shalle neuer haue no Joye with the /
 And by cause that the yonge woman was redy
 in speche and malycious / she answered forth with
 to her husbond / My frend thou arte wel be-²⁰
 holden and bounden to me / For by cause and
 for the loue the goddes haue restored to the thy
 fyght / wherof I thanke alle the goddes and
 godeffes whiche haue enhaunced and herd my
 prayer / For I desyryng moche that thou myght²⁵
 see me / cessed neuer day ne nyght to pray them /
 that theye wold rendre to the thy fyghte / wher-
 fore the goddesse Venus vyfibly shewed her self
 to

to me / and fayd / that yf I wold <sup>be-
dne</sup> fomme play-
fyre to the fayd yonge man she shold reftore to
the thy fyght / And thus I am cause of it ⁷ And
thenne the good man fayd to her / My ryght
dere wyf & good frende / I remercye and thanke ⁵
yow gretely / For ryght ye haue and I grete
wronge.

¶ The xiiij fable is of the Tayller / of a kynge /
and of his seruaunts



En ought not to doo some other /
that whiche he wold not that it
were done to hym / As it appiereth
by this present fable / of a kynge
whiche had a tayller whiche was
as good a workman of his craft / as ony was at
that tyme in alle the world / the whiche tayller
had with hym many good seruauntes / wherof
the one was called Medius / whiche surmounted
alle the other in shapyng or sewyng / wher-
fore the kyng commaunded to his styward that
the sayd tayllers shold fare wel / and haue of the
best metes and of delycious drynke / ¶ It happed
on a daye that the mayster Styward gaf to them
ryght good and delycious mete in the whiche
was some hony / And by cause that Medius was
not atte that feste / the styward sayd to the other /
that they shold kepe for hym somme of their
mete / And thenne the mayster tayller ansuerd /
he must none haue / For yf he were here / he
shold

shold not ete of hit / For he ete neuer no hony /
 And as they had done / Medius came / and de-
 maunded of his felawes / why kepte you not
 parte of this mete for me / And the styward
 anfuerd and sayd to hym / By cause that thy
 mayster sayd to me / that thow ete neuer no
 hony / no parte of the mete was kepte for the
 And Medius anfuerd thenne neuer one word /
 but beganne to thynke / how he myght paye his
 mayster / And on a day as the styward was allone
 with Medius / he demaunded of Medius / yf he
 knewe no man that coude werke as wel as his
 mayster / And Medius sayd nay / And that it
 was grete dommage of a fekeness that he had /
 And the styward demaunded what fekeness hit
 was / And thenne Medius anfuerd to hym / My
 lord whan he is entryd in to his franfy or
 wodeness / there cometh vpon hym a rage / And
 how shalle I knowe hit sayd the styward / Cer-
 tainly my lord sayd Medius / whan ye shal see
 that he shalle sette at his werke / and that he
 shalle loke here and there / and shal smyte vpon
 his borde with his fyft / theñe may ye know
 that his fekenesse cometh on hym / And thene
 withoute ye take and bynde hym and also bete
 hym wel / he shalle doo grete harme and dom-
 mage / And the styward sayd to hym / Care not
 therof my frend / For wel I shalle beware my
 self

felf of hym / And on the mornynge next folow-
 ynge the ftyward came for to fee the tayllers /
 And whan Medius whiche knewe wel the caufe
 of his comynge / ^(xc, he) tooke awaye fecretely his
 mayfters fheres / and hydde them / And anone
 his mayfter beganne for to loke after them / and
 fawe and ferched al aboute here and there / and
 beganne to fmyte his fyfte vpon the borde / And
 thenne the mayfter ftyward beganne to loke on
 his maners / and sodenly made hym to be take
 and holde by his feruaunts / And after made
 hym to be bond and wel beten / Thenne was
 the mayfter tayller al abaffhed / and demaūded
 of them / My lordes wherfor doo ye bete me foo
 outrageoufly / what offense haue I done / ^{where} wher-
 fore I muft be bound and thus be bete / And
 thenne the Styward fayd to hym in thys maner /
 by caufe that Medius told me / that thow art
 frantyk And yf thow be not wel bete / thow
 fhouldeft doo grete harme and dommage / And
 thenne the mayfter came to his feruaunt Medius
 and rygoroufly fayd to hym / Ha a euyl boye
 fylled whan [with] euylle wordes / whan faweft
 thow me madde / And his feruaunt proudly
 anfuerd to hym / My mayfter whan dydeft thow
 fee that I ete no hony / And therefore I threwe
 to the one bole for another / And the mayfter
 ftyward / and alle his feruaunts beganne thenne to
 lawhe

Es J. J.

lawhe / and fayd al that he hadde wel done /
¶ And therfore men ought not to doo to ony
other that thyng whiche they wylle not that
men dyd to them /

¶ Here enden the fables of Alfonse

¶ And folowen other fables of Poge the Floren-
tyn

¶ The fyrst fable is of the subtyltye of the woman
for to decegue her husband



He cautele or falskede of the woman
is wonder merueyllous / as it ap-
piereth by this fable / Of a mar-
chaūt whiche was wedded of newe
vnto a fayre and yong woman /
the whiche marchaunt wente ouer the see for to
bye & selle / and for to gete somwhat for to lyue
honestly / And by cause that he dwellyd to longe /
his wyf supposed that he was dede / And ther-
fore she enamoured her self with another man /
whiche dyd to her mykle good / as for to haue
doo make and bylde vp his hows of newe the
whiche had grete nede of reparacion / and also he
gaf to her all new utenfyles to kepe houshold /
And within a long tyme after the departyng of
the marchaunt he came ageyne in to his hows
whiche he sawe newe bylded / & sawe dysshes
pottes / pannes / and fuche other houshold / wher-
fore he demaunded of his wyf how and in what
maner she had foude the facion and the mean
for to haue repayred so honestly his hows / And
she ansuerd that it was by the grace of god / And
he

he anfuerd / Bleffyd be god of hit / And when he
 was within the chambre / he fawe the bedde
 rychely couerd / & the walles wel hanged / and
 demaunded of his wyf he had done before / And
 ſhe thenne anfuerd to hym in lyke maner as ſhe⁵
 dyd before / And therfore he thanked god as he
 had done to fore / And as he wold fette hym at
 his dyner / there was brought before hym vnto
 his wyf a child of thre yere of age / or there
 aboute / wherfore he demaunded of his wyf /¹⁰
 My frend to whome belongeth this fayre child /
 And ſhe anfuerd / My Frend the holy ghooft of
 his grace hath ſente hit to me / Thene anfuerd
 the merchaunt to his wyf in this manere / I
 rendre not graces ne thankes not to the holy¹⁵
 ghooft of this / For he hath taken to moche
 payne and labour for to haue it made up myn
 owne werke / And I wyll that in no maner wyſe
 he medle no more therwith / For ſuche thyng
 belongeth to me for to doo hit / and not to the²⁰
 holy ghooft.

C The second fable is of the woman and of
the ypocryte



He generacion or byrth of the ypocryte is moche dampnable and euylle / As it appiereth by this fable / and as poge reherceth to vs whiche sayth / that somtyme he fond hym self in a good felauſhip / where he herd a fable / whiche was there reherced / Of the whiche the tenour foloweth / and feyth the ſayd poge / that of alle the goodes of this world / the ypocrytes ben poſſeffours / For how be hit /¹⁰ that an ypocryte haue ſomtyme wylle for to helpe ſomme poure and Indygent / Neuertheles he hath a condycyon within hym ſelf / that is to wete / that he ſhold rather ſee a man at the poynt of dethe than for to ſaue his lyf of an halſpeny /⁵ And this preſumpcion is called ypocryſye / as ye ſhal here hereafter by the fable folowyng the whiche ſayth that one beyng in the felauſhip of Poge reherced / that ſomtyme the cuſtomme of alle the poure was that they wente before the²⁰ folkes dores withoute ſayenge ony word / It happed thenne on that tyme that a poure man moche

moche faire and of good lyf wente to serche
his lyf fro one dore to another / And vpon a
day emonge other he wente and sette hym self
vpon a grete stone before the yate of a wydowe /
whiche wydowe was acustommed to gyue hym
euer somwhat / ¶ And whan the good woman
knewe that he was at hir dore she dyd brynge
to hym his porcion as she was custommed for to
doo / And as she gaf to hym the mete she loked
on hym / and seyng hym soo fayre / and wel
made of body / she thenne fylled of carnal con-
cupiscence / and brennyng in the fyre of loue /
requered and Instantly prayd hym that he wold
retorne thyder within thre dayes / and promysed
to him that she shold gyue to hym a ryght good
dyner / And the poure man sayd to her that he
shold doo soo / and whanne he came ageyne / he
sette hym self as before / atte dore of the wydowes
hows / whiche the woman knewe well whanne
he shold come / wherfore she came to the yate
and sayd / Come within good man / For now we
shalle dyne / to the whiche prayer the poure
man assented / & entred within the hows / the
whiche wydowe gaf to hym good mete / and
good drynke / And whanne they had wel dyned /
the sayd wydowe pressyd the good man strongly
and after she kyssed hym / requyrynge hym / that
she might haue the cople of his loue / And thēne
the

the poure man al aſhamed & vergoynous know-
ynge her thoughte and her wylle / anſuerd thus
to her Certaynly my good lady I dare not / but
neuertheles he wold fayne haue done hit / And
the wydowe al embraced with loue beſeched and
prayd hym more and more / And thenne whan
the poure man ſawe that he myght not excuſe
hym ſelf / he ſayd to the wydowe in this manere /
My frend ſyth that thow deſyreſt it for to doo
ſoo moche and ſoo grete an euylle / I take god
to my wytnes / that thow arte cauſer of hit / For
I am not conſentyng to the faytte or dede / but
ſayenge theſe wordes he conſented to her wylle

¶ The thyrde fable is of a yonge woman whiche
accuſed her huſbond of coulpe or blame

[Omitted. Cf. Poggio *Facetiæ* 45.]

¶ The fourth fable is of the huntynge and
hawkyng



Oge Florentyn reherceth to vs / how
ones he was in a felauſhip where
men ſpak of the ſuperflue cure of
them whiche gouerne the dogges
and hawkes / wherof a mylannoys
named Paulus beganne to lawhe / and lawhyng
requyred of Poge that he wold reherce ſomme
fable of the ſayd hawkes / And for loue of alle
the felauſhip he ſayd in thys manere / Somtyme
was a medecyn whiche was a Mylannoys This
medecyn heled al ſoles of al maner of foly / and
how & in what manere he dyd hele them / I
ſhall telle hit to you This medycyn or leche had
within his hows a grete gardyn And in the
myddes of hit was a depe and a brode pytte /
whiche was ful of ſtynkynge and Infeſted water /
And within the ſame pytte the ſayd medycyn
put the ſoles after the quantyte of theyr folyſh-
nes / ſomme vnto the knes / and the other vnto
the bely / And there he bonde them faſt at a
poſt / but none he putte depper / than vnto the
ſtomack for doubte of gretter Inconuenient / It
happed

happed thenne that emonge other was one brought to hym / whiche he putte in to the fayd water vnto the thyes / And whan he had be by the fpace of xv dayes within the fayd water / he beganne to be peafyble and gate his wytte ageyne / And for to haue take fomme difporte and confolation he prayd to hym whiche had the kepyng of hym that he wold take hym oute of the water / and promyfed to hym that he fhold not departe fro the gardyn / And thenne the kepar that kepte hym vnbounde hym fro the ftake / and had hym oute of the water / And whanne he had be many dayes oute of the pytte / he wente wel vnto the yate of the gardyn / but he durft not go oute / leffe that he fhold be put ageyne within the fayd pytte / And on a tyme he went aboue vpon the yate / and as he loked al aboute / he fawe a fayr yong man on a horfbak / whiche bare a fperehawk on his fyfte / and had with hym two fayre fpaynels / whereof the fayd fole was al abafhed / And in dede as by caas of nouelte / he callyd the fayd yong man / and after he fayd to hym benyngly / My frend I praye the that thou wilt telle me what is that wherupon thow arte fette / And thenne the yonge fone fayd to hym / that it was a hors whiche prouffited to hym to the chace / and bare hym where he wold / And after the fole demaunded of hym / And what is that
whiche

whiche thou bereft on thy fyfte / and wher to is
it good / and the yong man anfuerd to hym / It
is a fperehawk whiche is good for to take par-
tryches and quaylles / And yet ageyne the fole
demaunded of hym / My frend what are thoos
that folowe the / & wherto ben they good / And
the yonge man anfuerd to hym / they be dogges
whiche are good for to ferche and fynde partryches
& quaylles / And whan they haue reysed them/
my fperehawke taketh them / wherof procedeth
to me grete folas and playfyre / And the fole
demaunded ageyne / To your aduys the takyng
that ye doo by them in a hole yere / how moche
is hit / fhalle hit bere to the grete prouffyte /
And the yong man anfuerd to hym four or fyue
crownes or ther aboute / And no more fayd the
sole / And to your aduys how moche fhalle they
dispende in a yere / And the yong man anfuerd
xl or l crownes / ¶ And whanne the fole herd
these wordes / he fayd to the fayd yonge man / O
my frend I pray the that foone thow wylt departe
fro hens / For yf our fyficien come / he fhalle
putte the within the fayd pytte by caufe that
thow arte a fole / I was put in it vnto the thyes/
but therin he shold putte the vnto the chynne /
for thow dost the gretteft folly that euer I herd
speke of / ¶ And therefore the studye of the
huntynge and hawkyng is a flouful cure / And
none

none ought to doo hit withoute he be moche
ryche and man of lyuelode / And yet hit ought
not to be done ful ofte / but fomtyme for to take
disporte and folas / and to dryue away melan-
cholye.

¶ The v fable is of the recytacion of somme
monstres



Poge of Florence recyteth how in his
tyme one named Hugh prynce
of the medycyns / sawe a catte
whiche had two hedes and a
calf which also had two hedes

And his legges bothe before and behynde were
double / as they had be Joyned al to gyder /
as many folke sawe / Jtem about the marches
of ytalye withynne a medowe was somtyme a
Cowe / the whiche Cowe maade and delyuerd¹⁰
her of a serpent of wonder and Ryght merueyl-
lous grettenesse / Ryghte hydous and ferdful /
¶ For fyrste he hadde the heede gretter than the
hede of a calf / ¶ Secondly / he had a necke of
the lengthe of an Ass / And his body made after¹⁵
the lykenesse of a dogge / and his taylle was
wonder grete / thycke and longe withoute com-
paryson to any other .x

¶ And whanne the Cowe sawe that she hadde
maade suche a byrthe / And that within her²⁰
bely she had borne soo ryght horryble a beefste /
she was al ferdful / and lyfte her self up / and
supposed

supposed to haue fledde awaye / but the Serpent with his wonder longe taylle enlaced her two hynder legges / And the Serpent thenne beganne to fouke the Cow / And in dede soo moche / and soo longe he fouked tylle that he fond somme mylke / ¶ And whanne the Cowe myght escape fro hym / she fledde vnto the other kyne / ¶ And Incontynent her pappes and her behynder legges and all that the Serpent touched was all black a grete space of tyme ¶ And soone after the sayd Cowe maade a fayre calf / The whiche merueylle was announced or sayd to the sayd Pope he beyng atte Ferrare /

¶ And yet ageyne soone after that / ther was fond within a grete Ryuer a monstre maryn / or of the see of the forme or lyknesse whiche foloweth /

¶ Fyrste he hadde from the nauylle vpward the symplytude or lykenesse of a man / And fro the nauylle dounward / he had the fourme or makynge of a Fyssh / the whiche parte was iumelle that is to wete double / ¶ Secondly he hadde a grete berd / and he hadde two wonder grete hornys aboue his eres / ¶ Also he hadde grete pappes / and a wonder grete and horryble mouthe / and his handes retched unto his entraylles or bowellys / And at the bothe his elbowes he hadde wynges ryght brode and grete
of

of fyfshes mayles / wherwith he fwymmed / and
 only he hadde but the hede oute of the water /
 ¶ It happed thenne as many wymmen bouked
 and wefshed at the porte or hauen of the fayd
 Ryuer / that thys horryble and ferdfull beeste
 was / for lacke and defaulte of mete cam &
 fwymmyng toward the fayd wymen / Of the
 which he toke one by the hand / and fupposed
 to haue drawe her in to the water / but fhe was
 ftronge / and wel auysed and refyfted ageynfte
 the fayd monftre / And as fhe deffended her
 felf / fhe beganne to crye with a hyhe voys / help
 help / to the whiche came rennyng fyue wym-
 men / whiche by hurlynge and drawynge of
 ftones kyld and flewe the fayd monftre / For he
 was come to ferre within the fonde / wherfore he
 myght not retorne in the depe water / And after
 whanne he rendryd his fpyryte / he made a ryght
 lytyl crye / fayenge wo that he was fo deformed
 and foo moche cruel / For he was of grete corpu-
 lence more than ony man's body / And yet fayth
 Poge in this manere / that he beyng at Ferrare he
 fawe the fayd monftre / And faith yet / that the
 yonge children were customed for to go bathe
 and wefthe them within the fayd Ryuer / but
 they came not all ageyne / wherfore the wymen
 wefshed ne bouked nomore theyr clothes at the
 faid porte / For the folke prefumed and fupposed
 that

that the monstre kyld the yonge children / whiche
were drowned / ¶ Jtem also within a lytyl whyle
after hit befelle aboute the marches of ytaly that
a child of fourme humayne whiche hadde two
hedes and two vyfages or faces beholdynge one
vpon the other / & the armes of eche other
embraced the body / the whiche body fro the
nauyl vpward was Joyned fauf the two hedes /
and from the nauyll downward the lymmes were
all fepered one fro other in fuche wyse that¹⁰
the lymmes of generacion were shewed many-
festly / Of the whiche child the tydynges came
vnto the perfone of the pope of Rome 2

¶ The sixthe fable is of the parson / of his
dogge / And of the Bissshop



Yluer dothe and causeth alle thyng
to be done vnto the halowynge
ageyne of a place whiche is pro-
phane or Interdicte / As ye shalle
mowe here by thys presente Fable /

¶ Of a preest dwellynge in the countrey whiche
somtyme had a dogge / whiche he loued moche /
the whiche preest was moche ryche / The sayd
dogge by proceffe of tyme deyde / & whan he was
dede / he entered and buryed hit in the chirche
yerd for cause of the grete loue whiche he loued
hym / it happed thenne on a day his bissshop
knewe hit by thaduertyfement of somme other /
wherfore he sente for the sayd preest / and sup-
posed to haue of hym a grete somme of gold /
or els he shold make hym to be straitly punysshed /
And thenne he wrote a lettre vnto the sayd preest .
of whiche the tenour conteyned only that he
shold come and speke with hym / And whan the
preest had redde the lettres / he vnderstood wel
alle the caas / and presupposed or bethought in
his courage / that he wold haue of hym somme
fyluer /

fylyer / For he knewe wel ynough the condy-
cions of his biffhop / & forth with he toke his
breuyarye / & an C crownes with hym / the pre-
late beganne to remembre and to fhewe to hym
the enormyte of his myfdede / And to hym⁵
answerd the preeft whiche was ryght wyfe fay-
enge in this manere / O my ryght reuerende
fader / yf ye knewe the fouerayne prudence of
whiche the fayd dogge was fylled / ye fhould not
be merueylled yf he hath wel defernyd for to be¹⁰
buried honeftly and worshipfully amonge the men /
he was al fylled with humayn wytte as wel in his
lyf / as in thartycke of the dethe / And thenne the
biffhop fayd / how may that be / reherce to me
thenne al his lyf / Certaynly ryght reuerende fader⁵
ye ought wel to knowe that whanne he was atte
thartycke and at the poynt of dethe / he wold
make his testament / And the dogge knowyng
your grete nede and Indygence / he bequethed
to yow an C crownes of gold / the whiche I¹⁰
brynge now vnto yow / And thenne the Biffhop
for loue of the money he affoylled the preft And
also graunted the fayd fepulture / And therfore
fylyer caufeth alle thynges to be graunted or
done.

¶ The biȝ fable is of the Foxe of the Cock and of
the dogges



Alle the fallary or payment of them
that mokken other is for to be
mocqued at the last / as hit ap-
piereth by this present Fable / of
a Cock whiche somtyme sawe a
foxe comynge toward hym fore hongry and
famyshed / whiche Cock supposed Wel that he
came not toward hym / but for to ete somme
henne / for whiche cause the Cock maade al his
hennes to flee vpon a tree / And whan the foxe
beganne tapproche to the said tree / he began to
crye toward the cock good tydynges good tyd-
ynges / And after he salewed the cok ryght
reuerently / & demaunded of hym thus / O god-
sep / what dost thou ther soo hyghe / And thy
hennes with the / hast not thou herd the good
tydynges worthy and prouffitable for vs ¶ And
thenne the Cok ful of malyce ansuerd to hym /
Nay veryly godsep / but I praye the / telle and
reherce them vnto vs / Thenne sayd the foxe to
the cok / Certaynly godsep / they be the best
that euer ye herd / For ye may goo and come /
talke

talke and communyque emong alle beestes withoute any harme or dommage / And they shalle doo to yow bothe pleasyr and alle seruyse to them possible / for thus it is concluded and accorded / and also confermed by the grete⁵ counceyll of all bestes / And yet they haue made commaundement that none be so hardy to vexen ne lette in no wyse any other / be it neuer so lytyll a beest / For the whiche good tydynges I praye the / that thou wylt come doune / to¹⁰ thende / that we may goo and synge / Te deum laudamus / for Joye / And the cok whiche knewe wel the fallaces or falsheede of the foxe answered to hym in this manere / Certaynly my broder and my good Frend thou hast brought to¹⁵ me ryght good tydynges / wherof more than C tymes I shalle thanke the / And sayenge these wordes the Cock lyfte vp his neck / and his feet / and looked farre fro hym / And the foxe sayd to hym / what godsep / where aboute lokest thou /²⁰ And the Cok answered to hym / Certaynly my broder I see two dogges strongly and lyghtly rennyng hytherward with open mouthes / whiche as I suppose come for to brynge to vs the tydynges whiche thou hast told to vs /²⁵ And thenne the Foxe whiche shoke for fere of the two dogges sayd to the Cock / god be with you my frend / It is tyme that I departe fro hens / or
these

these two dogges come nerer / And sayinge these
wordes toke his waye / & ranne as fast as he
myght / And thenne the cock demaunded and
cryed after hym / godsep / why rennest thou
thus / yf the sayd pacte is accorded / thou oughtest
not to doubt no thyng. Ha a godsep sayd the
Foxe from ferre / I doubt that these two dogges
haue not herd the decreet of the pees / And
thus whanne a begyler is begyled / he receyued
the fallary or payement / whiche he ought to
haue / wherfore lete euery man kepe hym self
ther fro



Pogius reherceth that there were two
wymmen in Rome / whiche he
knewe of dyuerse age and forme /
which came to a Curteyzan by
cause to haue and wyne somewhat
wyth theyr bodyes / whome he receyued and
happed that he knewe the fayrest of bothe twyes /
and that other ones / and soo departed / And
afterward whanne they shold departe / he gaf to
them a pyece of lynyen clothe / not decernynge
how moche eche of them shold haue to her
parte and porcion / And in the partynge of the
sayd clothe fylle bitwene the wymmen a stryf by
cause

cause one of them demaunded two partes after
 thexygence of her werke / And that other the
 half after theyre perſones / eche of them ſhew-
 ynge dyuerſly theyr reſons / that one ſayeng that
 ſhe hadde ſuffred hym twyes to doo his pleaſyr /
 and that other pretended / that ſhe was redy and
 in her was no defawte. And ſoo fro wordes they
 came to ſtrokes and cratchyng with naylys /
 and drawynge theyr here / in ſo moche that
 theyr neyghbours came to this batayll for to
 departe them / And alſo of theyr owne and
 propre huſbondes / not knowynge the cauſe of
 theyr ſtryf and debate / eche of them defendynge
 his wyues cauſe / And fro the fyghtynge of the
 wymmen hit aroos and came to theyr huſbondes
 with buffettis and caſtynge of ſtones / ſoo longe
 that men ranne bytwene them / And after
 the cuſtomme of Rome bothe the huſbondes
 were brought to pryſon berynge enemyte eche
 to other / & knewe no thyng the cauſe wher-
 fore / The ſayd cloth is ſette in the handes of
 the wymen ſecretely yet not departed / but is
 ſecretely argued amonge the wymmen in what
 wyſe that this mater ſhal be deuyded / And I
 demaunde of doctoures what the lawe is of it

¶ He ſayeth alſo that a marchaunt of Florence
 bought an hors of a man / and made his couenaunt
 with

with the fellar for xxv ducattes for to paye forth-
 with in hande xv ducattes / And as for the rest
 he fhold abyde dettour and owe / And the fellar
 was content / and therupon delyuerd the hors and
 receyued the xv ducattes / After this a certayne
 terme the fellar demaunded of the byar the
 refydue / And he denyed the payment / & had
 hym hold his couenant / For the byer sayd we
 were accorded that I fhold be thy debtour / And
 yf I fhold fatyfyue and paye the I fhold nomore¹⁰
 be thy dettour / et cetera / and soo he abode
 dettour



E telleth also that ther was a carryk
 of Jene hyred in to fraūce for to
 make warre ayenst engliffhmen /
 of the whiche caarrick the patrone
 bare in his fheld painted an oxe
 hede / whiche a noble man of fraūce beheld and
 fawe / & fayd he wold auenge hym on hym that
 bare tho armes / wherupon aroos an altercacion
 fo moche / that the frenffhman prouoked the
 Janueye to bataylle and fyght therfore / The
 Januey acceptyd the prouocacion / & came at
 the day affigned in to the felde withoute ony
 araye or habyllements of warre / And that other
 frenffhe man came in moche noble apparayll in
 to the feld that was ordeyned / & thēne the
 patrone of the carrik faid wherfore is it that
 we two fhould this day fyght & make bataill fore
 I faye faid that other that thyn armes ben myn /
 & bylonged to me to fore that thow haddest
 them / Thenne the Januey faid It is no nede to
 make ony bataylle therfore / For the armes that
 I bere is not the hede of an oxe but it is the hede
 of a cowe whiche thyng so fpoken the noble
 Frenffhe man was abaffhed and fo departed half
 mocqued



Also he saith that ther was a phisycyen
 dwellyng in a Cyte / whiche was
 a grete & a connyng man in that
 scyence / & he had a seruaūt a
 yong man whiche made pylles
 after a certayne forme that he shewed to hym /
 & whan this yong man / had dwellid long with
 hym / & coude parfytly make the pylles / he
 departed fro his mayster / and went in to straūge
 countre where as he was knowen / and lete men
 there to vnderstonde that he was a connyng
 phisycyen / and coude gyue medycynes for al
 maner maladyes and sekenesses / and mynistryed
 alwey his pylles to euery man that came to hym
 for ony remedy / And hit was soo that a poure
 man of that place where he was came to hym / and
 complayned how he had losse his asse / and prayd
 hym to gyue to hym a medycyne for to fynde
 his asse ageyne / And he gaf to hym the sayd
 pylles / & badde hym to receyue and take them /
 And he shold fynde his asse / And this poure
 man dyd soo / and after wente in to the feldes
 and pastures to seke and loke after his asse / And
 soo doyng the pylleys wrongth soo in his bely /
 that he must nedes go purge hym / and went
 amonge

amonge the reed and there eafyd hym / And
 anonet here he fonde his affe / wherof he beyng
 moche Joyeful ranne in to the tounne / and told
 and proclamed / that by the medecyn that he
 had receyued of the phifycyen he had found his
 affe / whiche thyng knowne alle the fymple
 peple reputed hym for a moche connyng man /
 whiche coude no thyng doo but make pyllyes /
 And thus many fooles are ofte taken for wyfe
 and connyng / For he was reputed to hele all
 maner fekenesses / and alfo to fynde affes.



Here was in a certayne towne a
 wydower wowed a wydowe for
 to haue and Wedde her to his
 wyf / And at the laft they were
 agreed and fured to gyder / ¶ And
 whan a yonge woman beyng feeruaunt with the
 wydowe herd therof / ſhe came to her mayftrefſe /
 and ſayd to her / Allas mayftrefſe what haue ye
 doo / why ſayd ſhe / I haue herd ſay ſayd the
 mayde / that ye be affured and ſhalle wedde
 ſuche a man / And what thenne ſayd the
 wydowe / Allas ſayd the mayde I am ſory for
 yow / by cauſe I haue herd ſaye that he is a
 peryllous man / For he laye ſo ofte and knewe
 ſo

so moch his other wyf that she deyde therof /
 And I am fory therof / that yf ye shold falle in
 lyke caas / to whome the wydowe answerd and
 sayd / Forsothe I wold be dede / For ther is but
 sorowe and care in this world / This was a
 curteys excuse of a wydowe



Ow thenne I wylle fynyshe alle
 these fables wyth this tale that
 foloweth whiche a worshipful
 preeft and a parson told me late /
 he sayd / that there were duel-
 lynge in Oxenford two prestes bothe maystres of
 arte / of whome that one was quyck and coude
 putte hym self forth / And that other was a good
 symple preeft / And soo it happed that the
 mayster that was perte and quyck was anone
 promoted to a benefyce or tweyne / and after to
 prebendys / and for to be a Dene of a grete
 prynces chappel / supposynge and wenynge that
 his felaw the symple preeft shold neuer haue be-
 promoted but be alwaye an Annuel / or at the
 most a parysshe preeft / So after longe tyme that
 this worshipful man this dene came rydynge in
 to a good paryssh with a x or xij horses / lyke a
 prelate / and came in to the chirche of the sayd
 parysshe / and fond there this good symple man
 somtyme

somtyme his felawe / whiche cam and welcomed
hym lowely / And that other badde hym good
morowe mayster Johan / and toke hym fleyghtly
by the hand / and axyd hym where he dwellyd /
And the good man sayd in this paryssh / how
sayd he / are ye here a sowl preest or a paryssh
preste / nay fyr said he / for lack of a better
though I be not able ne worthy I am parson
and curate of this paryshe / and thenne that
other aualed his bonet and said mayster par-¹⁰
son I praye yow to be not despleasyd / I had
supposed ye had not be benefyced / But mayster
sayd he / I pray yow what is this benfyce worth
to yow a yere / Forsothe sayd the good symple
man / I wote neuer / for I make neuer accomptes¹⁵
thereof / how wel I haue had hit four or fyue
yere / And knowe ye not said he what it is
worth / it shold seme a good benefyce / no For-
sothe sayd he / But I wote wel what it shalle be
worth to me / Why sayd he / what shalle hit be²⁰
worth / Forsothe sayd he / yf I doo my trewe
dylygēce in the cure of my parysshēs in prechyng
and techynge / and doo my parte longynge to
my cure / I shalle haue heuen therfore / And yf
theyre sowles ben lost or ony of them by my²⁵
defawte / I shalle be punysshed therfore / And
herof am I sure / And with that word the ryche
dene was abasshed And thought he shold be the
better /

better / And take more hede to his cures and
benefyces than he had done / This was a good
anfwere of a good preeft and an honest /

And here with I fyniffhe this book / translated
& emprinted by me William Caxton at
Westmynfter in thabbey / and fyniffhed
the xxvj daye of Marche the yere
of oure lord M CCCC lxxiiij /
And the fyrft yere of the
regne of Kyng Ryche-
ard the thyrde.

ERRATA.

Those in Gothic are in the original Caxton.

Page.	Line.		
6	11	Teeeth/ Tbeune,	teeth / Thenne.
22	4	auducyte,	andacyte.
29	12	gunnes,	gynnes.
35	7	nygt,	ny3t.
47	12	conenaunces,	conuenaunces.
54	20	double,	doubte.
58	9	rygte,	ry3te.
74	1	Seventh,	vj.
92	8	grede,	grete.
102	17	eylle,	euylle.
103	10	folowith,	foloweth.
105	18	beaulte,	beaute.
111		No heading.	
112	20	enhauced,	enhaunced.
115	16	aso,	also.
„	21	mone,	
116	17	ypocytes,	ypoerytes.
117	13	vysyded,	vysyted.
119	2	eylle,	euyelle.
120	3	behodeth,	behoueth.
120	12	thyn conuenynt,	thynconuenyent.
128	22	uf,	yf.
138	1	knygtt,	knyght.
„	25	fend,	and.
145	5	raynfull,	raynfall.
198	7	thexcafacions,	thexcusacions.
204	15	eylle,	euylle.
215	15	than dyd.	then hyt dyd.
221	3	he be,	he.
232	4	sommen of a,	som men of a.
234	12	and byldeth,	omit and.
238	24	ppssessour,	posseffour.
241	21	ond,	and.
246	17	And And,	And.
„	22	lasse,	lesse.
247	22	inhance,	enhaūce.
248	16	sacryfyed,	facryfyed.
251	13	Arabe,	a Rabe.
266	5	the,	thre.
276	3	wgiche,	whiche.
277	2	sechyng,	seckyng.
286	9	euyelle,	euylle.
313	8	parfzly,	parfizly.
„	23	wrongth,	wrought.

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 <i>cf.</i> Chaucer, <i>Cant. Tales</i>,
 12,940), <i>priest who says</i>
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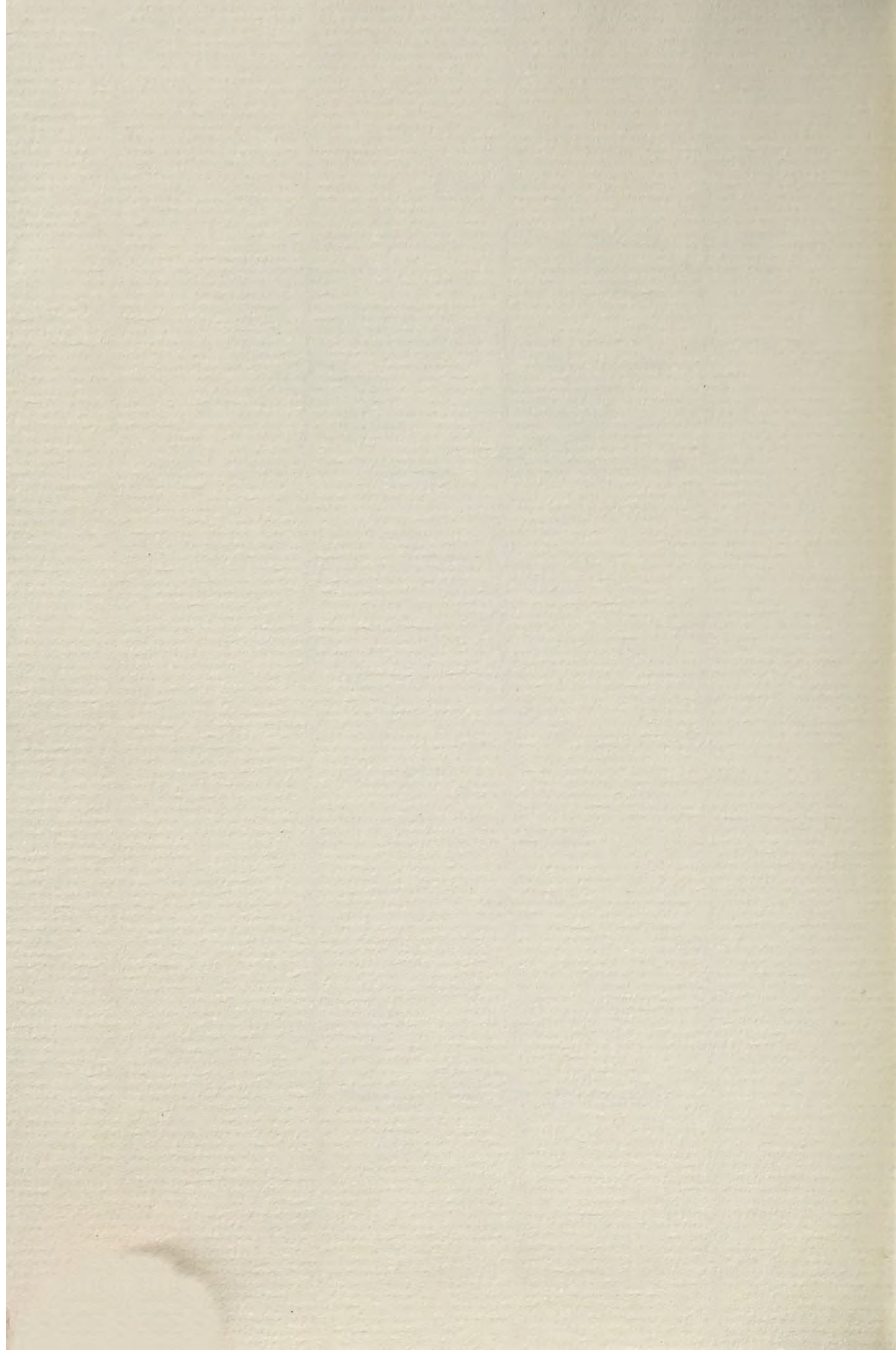
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H. HEINRICH
Buchbinderei
Flottenburg

Aesopus

The Fables of Aesop as first printed by William Caxton in 1484 with those
of Avian, Alfonso and Poggio, now again edited and induced by Joseph
Jacobs
Bd.: 2

London 1889

A.gr.b. 184-2

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb11536874-1